

AN ANALYSIS AND CRITIQUE OF THE PROGRAM FOR THE RENEWAL

OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AS ADVANCED BY

THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE: CHICAGO

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A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of

Southern California School of Theology

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Religion

by

Colvin Blanford

"

June 1969

This dissertation, written by

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requirements for the degree of*

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PREFACE

The opportunity to study at the Southern California School of Theology in Claremont and to engage in this particular study are greatly appreciated and gratefully acknowledged.

I am indebted to my congregation, the Cosmopolitan Baptist Church at San Francisco, for granting me the necessary study leave which enabled me to pursue the post-B.D./Rel.D. course of study at the School of Theology. Without their patience and encouragement this study would not have been possible.

I am also indebted to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Hardee Blanford, for their years of guidance and encouragement, and for enabling me to do the necessary undergraduate and graduate work preparatory to entering the School of Theology.

During the past two years, it has been necessary to neglect, to a great extent, the ones closest to my heart in order to pursue these studies. Therefore, I am particularly indebted to my wife, Margaret, and son, Colvin II, for their patience and understanding, and for providing a climate in which I enjoyed "peace of mind" and serenity of spirit throughout the course of my matriculation and research.

Even with an abundance of encouragement from family and friends, this particular study would have been impossible without the invaluable assistance of my guidance committee. I therefore give a special vote of thanks to Professors John B. Cobb, Paul B. Irwin, and Robert J. Arnott for their painstaking efforts in helping me to gain the necessary "distance" and objectivity in order to be able to better evaluate the

the program and work of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

Finally, I express my sincere appreciation to Richard Denton for his technical assistance and patience, and to Dolores Bertrand for typing the final draft of this manuscript.

April 22, 1969

PROOFREADER'S NOTE

The School of Theology standard dictates that all thesis typing should stay within the printed margins. Through a misunderstanding the margins were violated. This fact is noted as the thesis is accepted for binding.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

There is a widespread feeling and assertion that the contemporary church has long since lost sight of its mission and purpose and has therefore become the antithesis of what it claims and seeks to be. The assertion runs that whereas the church claims to be a *koinonia* that is God-centered and others-serving it is most often self-centered and self-perpetuating; whereas it claims to be an open community where personhood is respected and diversity accepted, it is most often made up of congregations which become closed religious clans where similarities of race and belief are the credentials that admit one and where dissimilarities and diversity of views are grounds for exclusion; whereas it claims that the Gospel it has to proclaim to the world is related to and hence relevant to all of life, yet in practice it too often goes out of its way to avoid the main issues of life and the controversies that inevitably develop around them.

As a consequence of these and other assertions by those inside as well as by those outside the church, many churchmen are attempting to rediscover, redefine, and fulfill the purpose of the church. This is by no means an easy task, for these persons have the almost impossible responsibility to achieve their purposes and at the same time take account of the almost infinite number of ambiguities involved.

This attempt may well be said to concern itself with how to make

more meaningful the noise of our solemn assemblies while we sit in our comfortable pew and view the secular city and still be honest to God. Due to both the ambiguity as well as the dynamics of the situation, it is recognizable that all conclusions will be highly tenuous and perpetually volatile.

As churchmen around the world have begun to work meticulously and indefatigably on defining the nature and purpose of the church, the term renewal has gained almost universal acceptance in defining the desired end of their efforts. Regardless of the general acceptance of this term, ambiguities still arise because of the multiplicity of meanings the term has for various people. To some renewal means developing inward piety and a deep devotional life; to some it means withdrawing from the general matrix of society in order to "get back to God" by engaging in solitude and contemplation in some remote place where one also feels "close to nature"; to some renewal means forming and participating in study groups where the issues of life are considered intellectually, and, even at that, where they are often discussed somewhat superficially; to some it means simply Bible study; while to others renewal means getting bodily, psychically, and spiritually involved in trying to help meet human needs that exist in every area of life and in every corner of the world.

Many would say, however, that renewal is all of this and more. They would say it begins with the person himself trying to understand and accept himself, moves to his trying to develop his potentialities in as many areas as possible and trying to find the will of God for his life. Some would say that renewal does not stop even here but that it motivates the person to seek to be informed about, concerned with, and

involved in the issues and predicaments that confront man in general.

As the words of an anonymously written poem declares:

I sought God and God I could not see;
I sought myself and myself eluded me;
then I sought my brother and I found all three.

George H. Shriver expresses the general and somewhat oversimplified opinion that renewal means

... to the fundamentalist, a special kind of evangelism; to the Orthodox, a rebirth of holiness (since to him the Church itself is renewal it cannot be renewed); to the German Lutheran and the Swiss Reformed, revivification of the church's faith by means of its theology; to the Roman Catholic, a development such as that epitomized in Vatican Council II; to the American Negro, refurbishing and replacement of social structures; to the young American protestant, a change in organization.¹

Shriver sees renewal as meaning all this and more. By way of explication he cites W. A. Visser't Hooft's contention that

- (1) Renewal is basically a work of God which involves an active waiting or expectation.
- (2) The Bible plays a decisive role in each movement.
- (3) There is no renewal without repentance. As the first of Luther's 95 theses states: 'Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, in saying "Repent ye," meant the whole life of the faithful to be a life of repentance.'
- (4) Renewal involves the Holy Spirit's creative resanctification of the church.
- (5) Revivification is accompanied by a restoration of true fellowship in the congregation of believers.
- (6) Finally, renewal requires a rediscovery of the apostolic, missionary character of the church.²

Donald G. Bloesch in his book *Centers of Christian Renewal* cites eight Christian communities, all of which seek to emphasize the withdrawal from the regular routines of life to form an exclusive secluded

¹George H. Shriver, "Renewal and the Dynamic of the Provisional," *Christian Century*, LXXXIV, No. 49 (December 6, 1967), 1551.

²*Ibid.*

community which emphasizes the pietistic, study, devotional, contemplative, and discipline-oriented concepts of renewal as previously alluded to.³

One of the central accusations hurled against the proponents of the type of church renewal which does not entail withdrawal but confrontation, action, and involvement is that they cry for this type of renewal but fail to suggest models and methods. As a result, several individuals and groups have responded to this challenge. One such group is the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

The primary purpose of this study is to present the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago as one model of the attempt to renew the Christian Church and analyze and criticize some of its central affirmations, programs, and practices. The *thesis* of this study is that the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago offers, at least in part, a viable model for church and community renewal and attempts to get to the heart of the problem by struggling with the concept of being or becoming authentically human. We shall attempt to show that the effort to alter the existing forms of humanness permeates the entire program of the Institute and is its basic concern.

Importance of the Study

The four-fold significance of this study is that it would (a) aid

³The renewal communities alluded to are: The Lee Abbey Community in England; Koinonia Farm in Sumter County, Georgia; the Community of Taize in France; the Agape Community in Italy; St. Julian's Community in England; the Iona Community in Scotland; the Ecumenical Sisterhood of St. Mary in Germany; and the Bethany Fellowship near Minneapolis, Minnesota.

in understanding the nature and purpose and program of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago, especially in light of it being one of the most controversial of the more *avant garde* groups in the Christian family, (b) to discuss and criticize some of its central affirmations as well as its program and work, (c) to provide future researchers and other interested persons with a background to studying this unique religious phenomenon, and (d) this study is intended to be of value in the development of methods and in the acquisition of tools to use for the continued renewal of my present congregation.

Preview of Organizational Structure

Chapter one shall be a statement of the purpose and importance of this study, its organizational structure, as well as a statement concerning the sources and definition of terms used. Chapter two is primarily a discussion of what the Ecumenical Institute is, its history, purpose, and program. Chapter three shall be an attempt to substantiate the thesis that the alteration, reformulation, and development of humanness is the primary purpose of the Ecumenical Institute. In doing so, we shall look at the Institute's concept of the present style of humanness as well as at its concept of the new humanity it wishes to see evolve. Chapter four is a consideration of the relation of the central theological affirmations of the Ecumenical Institute to the development of humanness. Chapter five shall be an analysis and critique of the pedagogical pre-suppositions of the Institute and their relation to the development of humanness. Chapter six shall consider the relation of the concept of imaginal education to the current Black revolution in the United States.

Chapter seven shall be the concluding chapter and shall point up the positive and negative aspects of the program of the Ecumenical Institute as well as advance some pertinent questions, comments, and recommendations, and offer a concluding statement.

Statement Concerning Sources

The Sources used in this study will include booklets, magazines, and articles as well as notes from the entire curriculum and program of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago plus books and articles on church renewal, education, psychology, sociology and theology, and magazines on religious education and church renewal.

Definition of Terms Used

Renewal. The term renewal as used in this study is understood as the attempt by churchmen to rediscover, redefine, and fulfill the mission and purpose of the church. The term is in no way limited to the conception of some that renewal has as its end personal, inward, revitalization -- although this is a part of the intended connotation. More explicitly, the term is used to denote this inward renewal only as the incunabula which would lead to the penultimate concern for others which would ultimately be expressed by direct action or involvement in the issues of life that confront man at all levels and in all areas of life. In a word, renewal as here defined is not seen as an end in itself, but as a means to fulfilling the prophetic, pedagogical, and therapeutic responsibility of the church in order to help it overcome some of its acedia.

Staff Pedagogues. This term denotes the members of the pedagogical team which is part of the staff of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago. These pedagogues reside in "Fifth City" and have teaching assignments at conferences throughout the country and around the world.

Non-Staff Pedagogues. These are people who decide to become local pedagogues after being exposed to the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago through one of its regional conferences conducted by a team of staff pedagogues. The non-staff pedagogues differ from the staff pedagogues in that they are not members of the Chicago staff nor the Chicago order, but have been trained and in turn conduct local conferences in their city, area, or region.

Fifth City. This is the name given to the specific area where the Institute has its headquarters and does its work. The typology is as follows: "First City" refers to the inner city; "Second City" denotes the downtown area; "Third City" is the inner suburb; "Fourth City" is the outer suburb; and "Fifth City" is an imaginal city composed of persons who accept responsibility for renewing the inner city and even the world. In fact, Fifth City may be anywhere -- in the inner city, suburbia, exurbia, downtown or anyplace else. The main criteria is that it is an imaginal area composed of persons who decide to reformulate and develop a certain community.

The Parish. This area corresponds to the original connotation of the word -- a political or residential community. Therefore, the parish is the wider community for which a local congregation is concerned and

which it serves.

The Congregation. This term denotes a local church congregation within the parish area.

Ecumenical Parish. This phrase refers to a group of cadres from congregations in a common parish area who decide to work together for the benefit of the whole area. Ideally, these cadres would represent congregations of different denominations or traditions.

The Cadre. These are the persons in a local congregation who have the spirit of renewal and who work inside the congregation in order to help renew all of its members. These persons have usually been exposed to the Ecumenical Institute through its literature and graduates of some of its courses and themselves have had at least one course offered by the Institute.

Metro or Sector. These are made up of cadres from local congregations in a given metropolitan area.

Region. The United States is divided into twenty-four regions by the Ecumenical Institute which are metropolitan areas where local cadres exist.

Area. The twenty-four regions just alluded to are divided into six general areas in the United States in which several metropolitan sectors and primal cadres exist.

Concluding Statement

In this chapter an attempt was made succinctly and systematically to present a statement concerning the purpose and importance of this study, its organizational structure, a statement concerning the sources used in the investigation, and a definition of terms used in relatively distinctive ways by the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago. An attempt was made to be thorough, yet succinct, but in no way comprehensive. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this chapter contained enough pellucidity to provide an adequate bridge to the ensuing chapters.

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE: CHICAGO?

In this chapter we shall look at this phenomenon known as the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago. We shall begin with a discussion of its history and purpose and move to a description of its organizational structure, curriculum, and community reformulation project. Again, we shall rely heavily upon notes and literature of the Institute.

History and Purpose

The Ecumenical Institute: Chicago is a religious order and "research and training center dedicated to the task of the renewal of the church through the renewal of the local congregation, for the sake of the entire world."¹ This organization came into being as the result of a decision by the World Council of Churches in 1954 to create a research and training center which would seek to train churchmen to deal in depth and constructively relate in depth to the scientific, cultural, and theological revolutions of our day.²

Dr. Walter Leibrecht served as the first director and helped establish the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago "as the U.S. counterpart of the original Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, near Geneva, Switzerland."³

¹*Image* (September 1967), 2. A magazine published by the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

²*Together* (March 1966). A magazine published by the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

³*Ibid.*

It was reported that

In 1962, the institute merged with the Church Federation of Greater Chicago, and in the transition got a new faculty. Appointed as the dean was Joseph W. Mathews, a Methodist minister and director of studies at the experimental Faith and Life Community in Austin, Texas, a research and training center working closely with University of Texas students and people from surrounding churches.... Now the institute is incorporated separately to hold its own property, but is still an operating auxiliary of the Church Federation. In 1964, it purchased the former campus of the Bethany Theological Seminary, complete with chapel and gym.⁴

The goal of this unique *avant garde* organization is to motivate and train churchmen to be revolutionaries in the sense of altering their present style of life and becoming involved in existing structures as well as in creating new structures to deal with the welter of problems that limit and deform the development of humanness throughout the world. The group is not only *avant garde* but also self-supporting and is composed of some two hundred people in some seventy families who live and work communally, engage in research, study, experimental worship, curriculum building and community reformulation, and help train persons throughout the country and around the world to be revolutionaries by first changing their own life styles and ultimate commitment, then working to remold and reshape the institutions and other structures that effect the emergence and development of human potential in order for them to be enabled to serve the deep needs of man to the optimum extent possible.

In order to maintain its self-support status, some of the members of the order are

⁴*Ibid.*

... assigned to salaried jobs in the larger community of Fifth City or Chicago. Where possible the jobs relate directly to the missional task of the order. Twenty-seven are school teachers: nine in the preschool, six in the elementary schools, ten in the high schools, and two teaching at the university level. Six are nurses, three at a hospital in Fifth City, two in the Public Health Service, and one at Cook County Hospital.⁵

However, it is also reported that these salaried persons do not provide the sole support for the Institute, but that much comes from foundation grants, training programs, and contributions of individuals throughout the world.⁶

The "Third Order"

The Institute is somewhat anachronistic in that it seeks to revitalize the concept and use of religious orders in our contemporary world. "The Order maintains the three traditional categories of the Elders, the Catechumens and the Novitiates, or the Permanent House Church or Confreres, the Fellows, and the Interns."⁷ However,

The administrative structure for the operation of the Order and the operation of the program of the Ecumenical Institute are separate.... Within the Order, it is the members of the Permanent House Church and the Fellows who take responsibility for the major policy decisions. The opinions and insights of the Interns, on the other hand, are always honored, but they do not finally make the decisions. In the actual operation of the Ecumenical Institute administration, however, it is often impossible to distinguish newcomers from old

⁵I.E. (November 1966), 5. A newsletter published by the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

⁶This information was provided through lectures and discussions at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago during its 1968 Summer Conference.

⁷Image (September 1967), 14.

hands. Assignment of responsibility is made strictly on the basis of demonstrated competence and the willingness of the individual to assume major responsibility.⁸

Members of the order take responsibility for the welfare of each other as well as for the wider community. The members not only work, study, and plan together, but also engage in daily experimental worship and frequent recreation. For it is axiomatic within the order that their relationship to and concern for each other must include every phase of their life in order to be truly authentic.

Although most of the people within the order are married and several have children, there are many single persons who are dynamically related to and involved in the total missional task. Because of the new style of the family that is being forged by the members of the Institute, it is probable that many persons would see being married and having a family as an obstacle to full involvement in the mission of the order. For within the order, *nothing*, not even one's family, is to come before the mission! The force of such a stance is seen in missional families leaving their newborn babies after they are a few weeks old in order to go on extensive missional assignments and by members of the order sending their teenage children to live "on their own" in some other city or foreign country as they develop their own style of life.⁹

Each member of the order is therefore committed to its three-fold task of "research, training, and participational experimentation" within

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹From lectures and discussions at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago during the summer 1968 session.

Fifth City as they try to help forge a new image of the Black man in America, within the local church as they try to help renew the church and thus forge a new image of it in the contemporary world, and within the order itself as a group dedicated to performing together their missional task which they see to be on behalf of the entire world.¹⁰

In addition to being a part of the order, the option is also open to be a sojourner. "Each sojourner is assigned to an area of the mission (section assignment) within the life of the order."¹¹ A sojourner is expected to be a part of the communal order and program for at least three months, after which he may choose to become an intern for another nine months or more before deciding whether to become a Fellow or a part of the Permanent House Church.¹²

The sojourner program holds particular attraction for college students and seminarians, attracting as many as twenty-five or more each year. The prerequisite for joining this program is that one visit the Institute and take the basic theological course, if he has not already taken it.¹³ A model of a typical weekly schedule for a sojourner is found below.

¹⁰I.E. (November 1966), 5.

¹¹I.E. (March 1967), 11.

¹²From discussions with staff persons at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago during the summer 1968 session.

¹³I.E. (March 1967), 11.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
SECTION ASSIGNMENT					BEGINNING	
WORK ASSIGNMENT	CHICAGO	STUDY	WORK ASSIGNMENT	OR	REST/ RECREATION	
SECTION ASSIGNMENT		SECTION ASSIGNMENT	ADVANCED COURSE		HOUSE CHURCH	

(Figure from *I.E.* [March 1967], 11.)

The Curriculum

The curriculum of the Institute consists of seven courses of religious studies, seven courses of cultural studies, and three advanced supplementary studies of reading, strategy, and pedagogical training courses. The basic course, RS-1, deals with the current theological revolution and attempts to help the student "ground" religious concepts in his own experience. In other words, one is exposed to the concepts God, Christ, Spirit, and Church, and to definitions of each or explanations as to what these symbols point by Bultmann, Tillich, Bonhoeffer, and H. R. Niebuhr, and asked to what experience in his own life does this definition point. The course is supposed to "break" or "shatter" old images and concepts about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Church and send the student on his way to rethinking and rebuilding his images of these concepts. Hopefully, these new images will give him more lucidity to life and thus cause him to take a "new stance" to life. This "new stance" is to become a "spirit revolutionary" dedicated to renewing the church through the local congregation and removing the blocks to the development of full humanness for mankind throughout the world. The cultural curriculum includes selections from the writings of Ortega Y Gasset, Eliade, May, Mumford, and Sartre and attempts to expose one in depth to the present cultural, secular, urban, scientific, and technological revolutions in order to create within each person the lucidity and concern that will cause him to become totally committed to and involved in one or more of these revolutions in order to create and

develop a new and more authentic style of humanness.¹⁴

A full-scale model of the total curriculum of the Institute is listed below.

Although the Institute has its headquarters at Chicago, it has established a network of regional training centers across the nation.¹⁵ These regional training centers are operated by course graduates who have as a primary goal the development of cadres in the local congregations in their regions. In addition to these training centers, similar centers have been created in parts of Latin America, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Africa, Asia, and Europe.¹⁶ The "time line" for the Institute calls for producing enough primal cadres throughout the world by the year 2008 as to complete the renewal of the church.¹⁷

Reports by the Institute indicate wide saturation of the pedagogical program in the United States as well as in several foreign countries. It is reported that

¹⁴This information compiled from lectures and discussions by staff pedagogues of the Ecumenical Institute who conducted a parish ministers' seminar at White Sulphur Springs, St. Helena, California, February 28 through March 1, 1967, as well as at the Summer 1968 session of the Institute at Chicago.

¹⁵Listed on the Institute's letterhead were the following U.S. cities: Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, Kansas City, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Boston, Cleveland-Pittsburgh, New York, Philadelphia, Rochester, Washington, Denver, Great Falls, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Francisco, Seattle, Atlanta, Houston, Memphis, Miami, New Orleans, and Oklahoma City.

¹⁶*I.E.* (March-May 1968).

¹⁷From discussions and lectures at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago during the Summer 1968 session.

THE CURRICULUM --

OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RS-I The Theological Revolution

A prerequisite course focusing on the basic spirit questions in the post-modern world, problems of authentic self-understanding, decision-making, vocational significance, human relations and creative participation in civilization. The aim is to enable the participants to think through for themselves who they are and how they can involve themselves in the present age.

CHRISTIAN MEMORY

RS-II A The Historical Church

A study in the theology of the fathers of Christianity amid the milieux of their eras. Writings by men of faith are scrutinized for the Christian community during the ancient, medieval and modern periods.

RS-II B The New Testament

A study of the witness to the Word in history made by the early Christian community. The perspectives of John, the Synoptic writers and Paul toward the event of Jesus the Christ are examined together with the basic cultural heritage of the Greek, Hebraic and Gnostic life styles.

RS-II C The Old Testament

A study of the understanding of God present in historical living as known to the people of Israel. The life stances taken in the wisdom writings, the prophetic pronouncements and the covenant law are probed in the context of the historical background of the ancient world.

REFORMULATION MODELS

RS-III A The Local Congregation

An analysis of the new image of the Church as mission to history and the dynamics of the local congregation which this demands. The course involves a series of workshops on worship, education, enabling, discipline, justing and witnessing love.

RS-III B The Ecumenical Movement

An analysis of the people of God in history as they are manifested in Christianity, Judaism and the secular faiths of today. Papers describing the current situation of Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, nationalism, communism and humanism are used to expose the issues and dilemmas of spirit men in the universal human community.

RS-III C The World Religions

An analysis of the human images by which people live out of their distinct cultural inheritance. The articulated visions of cultural leaders in civilization today are analyzed in order to reveal the unique gifts of Africa, the Far East, Sub-Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the West.

THE CURRICULUM (Continued)

OF CULTURAL STUDIES

CS-I The Cultural Revolution

An introductory course on the postmodern world as found in its scientific common sense, its urban style of life, and its secular mood which requires a revolutionary response, skill at model building, and a decision to act concretely to renew our social context. The aim is to cultivate people of wide vision trained to perform the practical tasks demanded for full humanness in our world.

CULTURAL WISDOM

CS-II A Psychology and Art

A study of cultural wisdom relative to understanding individual human beings. The science of psychoanalysis is examined in its biological, social and rational schools in tandem with the impressionism, expressionism and intentionalism of the arts.

CS-II B Sociology and History

A study of cultural wisdom pertaining to the social dynamics in the human community. The science of sociology involving analytical models for the economic, political and cultural aspects of society are set over against history as the humanity that has to do with the objective, rational and existential appropriations of humanness in the world.

CS-II C Natural Science and Philosophy

A study of cultural wisdom regarding the comprehensive grasp of human existence. The natural sciences of biology, physics and mathematics are placed in relation to the philosophical approaches present in analytical, existential and metacultural intellectual postures.

RESPONSIBILITY MODELS

CS-III A The Individual and the Family

An analysis of domestic life, the marriage covenant, family structures and the new image of the family as mission. Through workshops new models are created for the roles of the sexes, the budgeting of life expenditure and the symbolic relationships of the generations.

CS-III B The Community and the Polis

An analysis of the structures in the inner city, suburbia and outlying communities as segments of the metropolitan world. Model building methodologies are used to grasp a vision for local economic, political and cultural reformulation.

CS-III C The Nation and the World

An analysis of the situation around the globe economically, politically and culturally. The problems, goals and strategies for the future world are brought together in the creation of models for a responsible citizenry.

Over the past year more than 16,000 people participated in these courses. The Institute normally teaches between two and three hundred per week on its own Chicago campus. Roughly another 9,000 attend courses arranged by interested laymen and clergy around the nation. In the Spring 1967 teaching quarter, for example, 56 courses were sponsored in 35 separate U.S. cities, representing 20 states. The remainder of the participants are taught in special, extended week-day programs for clergymen and in weekend night schools in the Chicago area. A first this year was a team of teachers sent to Southeast Asia for the specific purpose of presenting the curriculum in that part of the world. The effort was warmly received and plans are now well underway to extend this international thrust considerably in the coming year. It is interesting to note that each year since the present faculty assumed its assignment in Chicago, the program has doubled in size.¹⁸

At the 1968 Summer Conference at Chicago, it was estimated that during the six years the pedagogical part of the Institute's program has been in operation, some 250,000 people around the world have taken at least its introductory course.¹⁹

The Fifth City Community Reformulation Project

In 1964, the Fifth City Community Reformulation Project was inaugurated in order to provide a visible model of how an inner city congregation can go about the task of not only renewing itself, but also renewing the community in which it operates. In fact, church renewal is understood by the Ecumenical Institute as not an inter-church exercise for its own sake, but as renewal for the sake of the entire world -- beginning with one's own community. "The model is based on the three part analysis of life: the economic, political, and cultural aspects,

¹⁸Image (September 1967).

¹⁹Estimated by Gene Marshall, member of the Chicago Permanent House Church at the Institute's headquarters, during lecture and discussion at the Summer 1968 session.

with the cultural as the key to the 20th. century."²⁰

The name Fifth City Community Reformulation Project comes from a typological scheme for classifying the people of the metropolitan area into sub 'cities.' (For example the second city are people who have decided to return to the city, living in the larger downtown apartment buildings, liberal in orientation but not working structurally for the reformulation of the city). The fifth city are people who have decided to pick up the task of reformulating the city for our time.²¹

The Institute is located on the West side of Chicago where some five thousand Afro-Americans are ghettoized and where the deplorable conditions of ghetto life exist.

The project is designed to provide the initial enabling thrust which will make possible a self-conscious community capable of mobilizing its own leadership and resources to care for the needs of its own people. Project strategy falls into two parts: the development of a strong sense of community identity and pride, and the implementation of simple yet flexible organizational structures to provide or channel all necessary community services. The role of the Institute staff is that of starting motor or perhaps a pump primer. It provides the initially high input of resources and personnel to get the structural machinery operating.²²

As members of the Institute began constructing a model for community reformulation, it became the consensus that the model should be both systematic and comprehensive. As a result, five rudimentary propositions evolved and still persist.

PROPOSITION 1: "A community reformulation project must be conducted in a limited geographical area."²³

As the workers at the Institute undertook to operationalize this proposition, the sixteen-block area designated as Fifth City was chosen

²⁰*I.E.* (August 1967), 7.

²¹*Image* (Summer 1967), 3.

²²*Ibid.*

²³*Image* (September 1967), 8.

as the geographical area in which to commence the task of reformulation after a year of deliberation, research, and exploration of the ghetto areas found in Chicago.

PROPOSITION 2: "Community reformulation must deal with the depth human problems to be found in the area."²⁴

The Institute sees the depth human problem for Black Americans as "the self-reinforcing negative self-image of the Negro, or the 'victim image' for short."²⁵ They admit that this is a rather generalized concept, but feel that it expresses in capsule form the deep human problem of the Afro-Americans who have been downtrodden covertly as well as overtly for some four hundred years. In fact, they point to Lerome (sic) Bennett and Langston Hughes as frequent users of this concept in their descriptions of the Black man's plight in America.²⁶

PROPOSITION 3: "The key to the identity building phase of community reformulation is the intentional use of symbols."²⁷

The Institute understands symbols to involve and point to "some conviction or decision about the style of life of the person who relates to them."²⁸ Accordingly,

In 5th. City, they point to the fact of pride in being a 'Black' or Negro human being. They point to pride in community identity. And they point to the conviction of the necessity of assuming responsibility for the lives of the residents themselves and for their neighbors.... As is already evident, the relationship between the use of symbols and the process of 'imaginal education' is very close. While imaginal education is used to evoke conceptions of a changed and expanded life style, the symbols operate to embody

²⁴*Ibid.*, 9.

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷*Ibid.*, 10.

²⁸*Ibid.*

those possibilities and fix them in meaning. On the level of community identity development, symbols operate in a way which is probably most closely akin to their use in marketing practices. Without these symbols, there could be no community.²⁹

In developing this community identity, emphasis has been placed upon symbols in re-portraying the history and contributions of the Black man in America. A strong point of this part of the program is that emphasis is not placed upon the life and contribution of Afro-American individuals, but on the Afro-American people as a people.³⁰

PROPOSITION 4: "Community reformulation must deal with all of the critical problems of a community simultaneously."³¹

Because ghetto problems are so deeply interrelated, it is held that the only effective and efficient method of eradicating one problem is to plan a strategy and devise a program that will encompass all problems at once. This point may be explicated by the point that in the ghetto areas

... income limits education, which limits job opportunities, which limits housing alternatives, which negates self-respect, which limits motivation, which limits cultural developments, which limits family stability -- and so to limited education and on and on. All of the problems interact upon one another in a complex matrix of crisscross relationships. All which leads back to the initial point that to deal with any particular ghetto problem it is necessary to deal with all problems at once.³²

PROPOSITION 5: "Community Reformulation must deal with all age levels in the community."³³

There are three succinct and significant points for explicating this proposition. The first is that

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹*Ibid.*, 11.

³²*Ibid.*

³³*Ibid.*, 12.

The rationale for this proposition is quite similar to that for the previous one. Just as community problems tend to reinforce one another, so the attitudes of the various age levels within a community tend to reinforce one another.³⁴

Secondly, as of September 1967, the youngest participant in the Fifth City program was thirty-five days old and the eldest was eighty-seven years old.³⁵ Perhaps the most exciting educational program conducted by the Institute for the citizens of Fifth City is their unique pre-school program which includes youngsters from a few days old through age five.³⁶ The program is

... the third largest pre-school program operated with funds from the Chicago Committee on Urban Opportunity with a full curriculum, including the teaching of reading through the experimental use of the I.T.A. alphabet, and the teaching of simple arithmetic using the device of Cuisinaire rods. The Mini-School program, in contrast to the usual baby-sitting, is highly sophisticated. Following the lead of Jerome Kagan of Harvard, William Kessen at Yale, this program has sought to apply the latest findings in child development research, first in a regular curriculum for children 21 days through one year, then in a second program for one and two-year olds.³⁷

The final point in illustrating this proposition is that the senior members of Fifth City are not content to be passive and engage just in the usual type of senior citizen activities, but this group has assumed the responsibility for "teaching a five session course in Negro history and heritage in the public school system itself."³⁸ This is certainly a marked departure from some of the current programs which are limited to relatively inert activities and nostalgic reminiscences for our older citizens.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 13.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶"Preschool Manual of Operations" (Ecumenical Institute), 4.

³⁷*Image* (September 1967), 12.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 13.

By way of recapitulation, it is significant to point out that these five basic propositions fall generally into two major categories.

The first three basic propositions (limited geographical area, dealing with the depth human problem and the use of symbols) are all directly related to the task of building community identity. The last two propositions are more directly connected with the building of a program of combined community services.³⁹

The total organization of the Fifth City Community Reformulation Project includes stakes, guilds, a temple, steering committee, and community congress.

The Guilds. The guilds are the most basic organizational units in the project and are the only constructs open to all residents of the community, whether they are generally related to some other Institute structure or not. The guilds are the action groups in the Institute's project scheme, and operate five distinct functions: economic, political, educational, stylistic, and symbolic. "In short, the Guilds comprise a comprehensive network of organizations hitting at every real problem of the community with a positive program of creative action."⁴⁰

The Stakes. In order to further facilitate the possible development of a strong sense of community identity and pride, the area was divided into five subdivisions referred to as stakes.

The stakes provide an organizational base from which the leadership can be recruited, individual needs and concerns learned and program and service information distributed. Akin to the nature of block

³⁹*Ibid.*, 10.

⁴⁰"Urban Reformulation Model" (Ecumenical Institute: Chicago), IV-31.

clubs, stakes enable the penetration of the community and the caring for the needs of its inhabitants. The first intention was to develop a hard core of leadership of perhaps twenty people in each stake. By Spring 1967, however, attendance at stake meetings had jumped considerably, and it became clear that the number of stakes would have to be doubled if the job was to be done adequately. This was done, and 5th City now operates with ten stake units which meet weekly for planning and regular house-to-house visitation.⁴¹

As of May 1968, the community had developed its organizational structure to the point where it had

20 'quads' and 160 'units' of four to 10 families each. Volunteer 5th Citizens -- the 'Iron Men' of 5th City -- take responsibility for these community units, disseminate information, collect data on the needs etc. Action units in 5th City are the five 'guilds', which direct the 80 local community structures relating to economic, political, educational, cultural and social areas. Each guild is divided into four boards, which directs 20 operations -- ranging from the Employment Bureau to the Legal Assistance Clinic.⁴²

The Temple. The third structure or symbol, the Temple, is inclusive of the whole community and is also the main gathering place for mass community meetings or activities. The temple therefore stands

... as the geographical node. As an architectural unit, it would, of course, house the key units of the five Guild structures. It would house the political forum, the economic services exchange of the community, and provide a focus for the performing and visual arts, as well as being a center for family and social life for every age level in the community.⁴³

Although the term Temple has deep religious connotations, these religious trappings have been relatively stripped from it in order to give the term a secular or profane meaning as well. However,

⁴¹*Image* (September 1967), 9.

⁴²*I.E.* (March-May 1968), 6.

⁴³"Urban Reformulation Model" (Ecumenical Institute: Chicago), IV-34.

In the model parish community, the Temple function would be comprehensive, housing all of these activities and more. Above all, what is important in the conception of the Temple is not a building. Rather it is the place it holds as the node or center of the community life. What is crucial is how human traffic in the community flows to it, from it, around it, and even through it. It could be a tent on a vacant lot, but if it functions as the center of the community, then it is indeed the Temple.⁴⁴

The Steering Committee. In the Fifth City model, another structure that has a propinquity to all other structures in the community is the steering committee. This committee

... is simply a community assembly where the leaders of both Stakes and Guilds are brought together. Here they evaluate the past, analyze the present and plan for the future. Theirs is the central coordinating structure, aimed at maintaining the balance of activity and energy as it is allocated throughout the structures of the community. In practice, it may work out that a sponsoring congregation for the community reformulation project must retain control of what happens in the early meetings of the community, but the objective is to create a self-sustaining community of leaders.⁴⁵

The Community Congress. The Community Congress also is an assembly of the Stake and Guild members of the community, but it operates less frequently than does the Stake and Guild meetings. Whereas the Stakes and Guilds meet weekly and monthly, the Congress meets quarterly. It is the comprehensive purpose of these meetings to provide

... a time of accounting when reports from activities conducted since the last meeting are presented. It is the time of imaginal explosion, when community leaders offer the vision for the future for the entire community to examine and approve. It has high symbolic import, employing many of the generally known community rituals, rehearsing the community story, and a time of offering when new leaders are introduced into the life and work of the

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, IV-35.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

community, and when the existing leaders given opportunity to rededicate their lives to the common task. In many ways akin to the idea of a town meeting, the Congress gives the opportunity for the community to renew itself periodically, and regenerate its power.⁴⁷

These constructs form just the present phase of the Institute's Fifth City Community Reformulation Project. Ideas are now being advanced and plans are being formulated to possibly extend the geographical scope of the project as well as the community services it seeks to provide. Accordingly,

Plans call for a considerable expansion of the 5th City area in the near future, once structural machinery for the present area is in full operation. An optimum size for such urban subcommunities has been suggested of between twenty and twenty-five thousand, although this is by no means an official decision.⁴⁸

In order to better comprehend the broad scope of the Fifth City Community Reformulation Project model as herein described, the following organizational chart is included on the succeeding page.

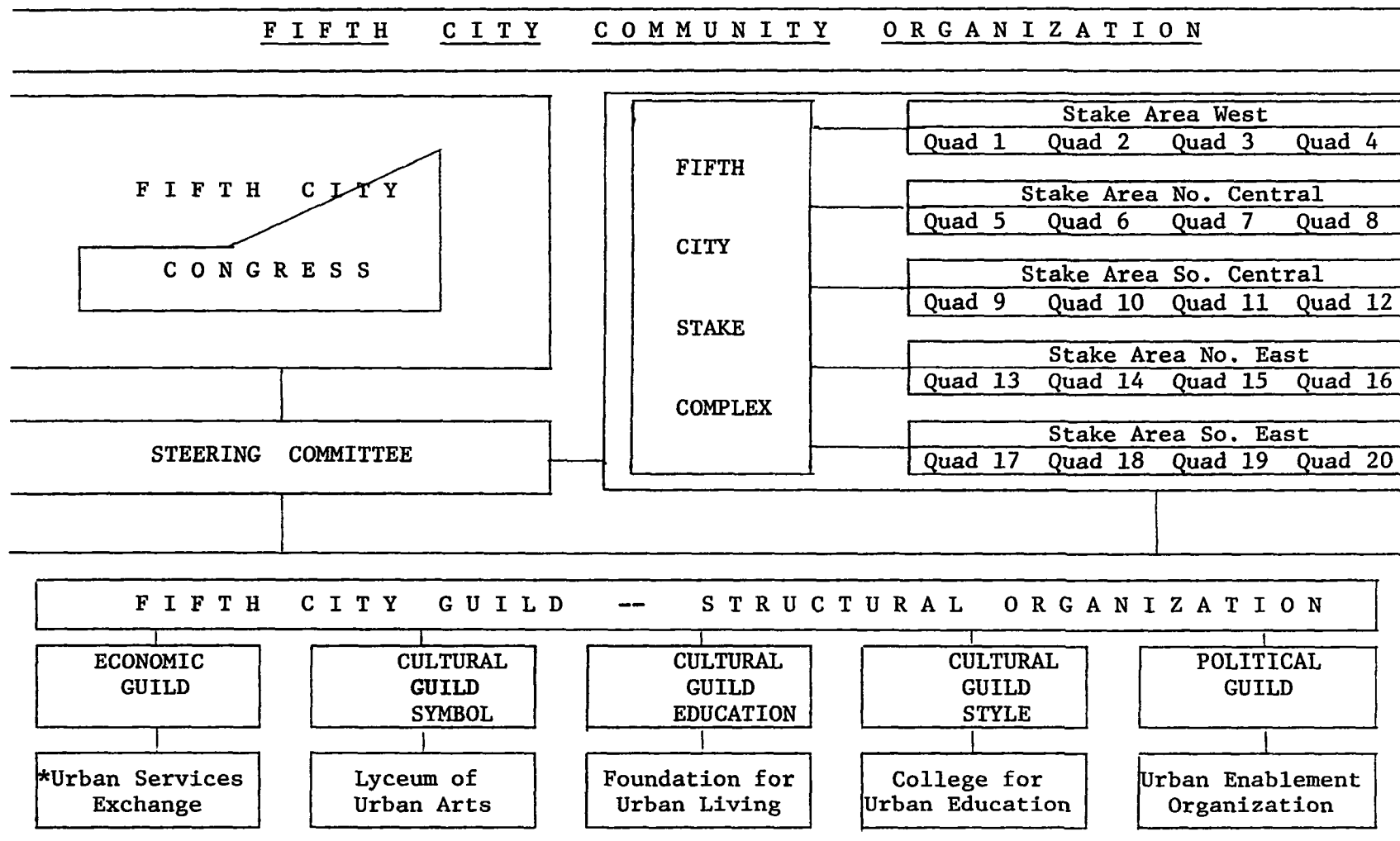
Concluding Statement

In this chapter we have looked at the history and purpose of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago, its organizational structure, curriculum and community reformulation project and provided charts to illustrate the structure and design of some of its basic constructs.

It has been noted that the pedagogical work of the Institute began in 1962 as the result of a decision by the World Council of Churches in 1954 to create a research and training center for churchmen and that the Fifth City Community Reformulation Project was inaugurated in 1964 as a

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁸*Image* (September 1967), 9.



*There are four Boards under each of these categories.

pilot-demonstration of what might be done to help the residents of the inner city enhance their self-image and develop the skills and power to renew their communities.

Chapter two has thus provided a descriptive and illustrative profile of the program and work of the Institute, and chapter three will describe and criticize its image of the present as well as the projected style of humanness.

CHAPTER III

THE CENTRALITY OF THE ALTERATION, REFORMULATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF HUMANNESS IN THE PROGRAM OF THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE: CHICAGO

In this chapter we shall seek to establish the centrality of the alteration, reformulation and development of humanness in the philosophy of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago. We shall therefore examine the Institute's concept of the present style of human existence as well as its conception of the new humanity it seeks to produce. The material for this chapter shall be drawn primarily from notes taken at the 1968 Summer Conference of the Ecumenical Institute at Chicago.

The Institute's Concept of the Present Style of Humanness

The Institute's concept of the present style of humanness may be described generally as the acquiescence of the masses in each society to the rule, oppression, and suppression of a small body politic which seeks mainly to continue its suppression and perpetuate its oligarchic rule. The masses see themselves generally as helpless pawns in the hands of a small social-economic-political-military group and also as powerless to change their condition.

The Institute groups the problems and conditions of each general area of the world (or each culture) into three categories: the economic, political, and cultural. According to its appraisal of the situation, all three problems must be dealt with simultaneously in each culture in order to facilitate the emergence and development of authentic humanness. For example, the Latin American countries, the Middle East, and the

African nations are classified as the general cultures of the southern hemisphere. A chart of the problems and power of Latin America, the Arabic Republic, and African nations as the Ecumenical Institute sees them is included.

The Institute sees this type of situation as forming the basis for dehumanization and disenfranchisement because such situations limit the masses and stifles their creativity, and relegates them to an inferior class of citizenship and human existence. As a result of these conditions, the Institute feels that the process of dehumanization and deformation of human personality is rendered more effective and complete.

The depth human problems in the United States, as maintained by the Ecumenical Institute, are found in the inner city and in the inner and outer suburbs. We shall briefly review the Institute's residential typology in order to place this point in a clearer perspective. As pointed out earlier, the Institute has developed a typological scheme of five areas or regions which it refers to as cities or sub-cities. First city is the inner city; second city is the downtown area where the so-called romantics who are liberal in orientation but passive insofar as actual involvement in renewing or improving the city reside in high-rise apartments; third city is the inner suburbs; fourth city refers to the outer suburbs, otherwise known as exurbia; and fifth city is the imaginal group of people who attempt to reformulate any one of these cities or sub-cities in a way that the residents take responsibility for creating the necessary constructs in their communities that will enable a more lucid, concerned, and involved citizenry to evolve.

Latin America	Arab Republic	African Nations
(ECONOMIC)	(ECONOMIC)	(ECONOMIC)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foreign domination. 2. Weak economic structure -- area owned by some 80 families. 3. Poor technical skills. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oil domination (almost totally dependent upon it for survival). 2. Agriculturally backward 3. Poor technical skills. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need economic power. 2. Weak economic structure -- most of money possessed by a few persons. 3. Poor technical skills.
(POLITICAL)	(POLITICAL)	(POLITICAL)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No long range planning and many political parties who constantly change power. 2. Uncertain as to what kind of political system they want. 3. Masses not prepared to participate in government. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of unity. 2. Lack of form. 3. People not prepared to participate in government. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Very unstable governments. 2. Lack of form. 3. People not prepared to participate in government.
(CULTURAL)	(CULTURAL)	(CULTURAL)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alienation of the Indian. 2. Identity crisis-- what does it mean to be Latin American. 3. Mass illiteracy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Islam 2. Lack of dignity and pride. 3. Mass illiteracy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tribalism -- need to think of being African first. 2. Urbanization a burden. 3. Mass illiteracy
(POWER)	(POWER)	(POWER)
The Church (Roman Catholic)	Language	Blackness

Reproduced from chart made at
1968 Summer Conference on 7/2/68.

The following chart shows the Institute's concept of some of the major gifts, blocks, and needs in the inner city as well as in inner and outer suburbia -- the latter which it also refers to as exurbia.

	GIFT	BLOCK	NEED
INNER CITY (Black Ghettoes)	Break loose style -- exam. Black "soul" music	No political power	Economic Educational Political Cultural
SUBURBIA "white bedroom communities"	1. Economic power 2. Investment know-how	1. Cultural Isolation 2. Cult of the uninvolved 3. Trying to escape problems of city	Organization and development of political power
EXURBIA "rural areas"	Have the political power -- most decisions on domestic & foreign affairs made by rural southern politicians	Inadequate economic development	Need to break out of their cultural isolation -- many are still "cut off" from most of the world

Reprinted from chart made during Summer Conference 1968 on July 1, 1968.

From this chart we see that the primary concern of the Institute for the reformulation and development of humanness in the United States is for the inner city and the two suburbias -- primarily inner suburbia. The present state of humanness in the Black ghetto that needs reformulating is regarded as multifaceted. It is at once psychological,

sociological, economic, political, educational, and cultural. The Institute sees the primary depth human problem in the inner city as being a negative self-image or victim-image in the minds of the Black residents. Generally, it is held that these persons see themselves as inferior to whites and other cultural and ethnic groups and view themselves as the helpless *victims* of a racist white society which has made them cultural transplants and relegated them to a deplorable, inhuman, and inferior status socially, economically, politically, educationally, and culturally.

On the other hand, the present life-style in suburbia is acclaimed by the Institute as dehumanizing and in need of radical reformulation because the suburbanite exploits and controls the inner city economically and politically then attempts to remove himself from the problems of the inner city in particular, and of the world in general, by escaping to a so-called "bedroom community" where he seeks to become and remain detached from the welter of problems that he has helped create in the inner city and in the world as a whole. This attempt to escape the global as well as the inner city problems of mankind and to acquire an attitude of acedia is held to be the cardinal sin of suburbanites. The next most serious offense, according to the members of the Ecumenical Institute, is to be lucid or aware and in spite of this lucidity and awareness to do nothing about the conditions and situations which exist in the world. The Institute refers to this type of position or reaction as "floating."

The members of the Institute therefore describe suburbanites as people who have lost the feeling and effect of concern for others and

have degenerated into a state of gross apathy. One Institute staff member described them as the modern "fat cows of Bashan," as described by the prophet Amos, who feel that they have arrived at their goal in life, or, at least are on their way to arriving at it, and have achieved whatever measure of success they have by oppressing and exploiting persons in the inner city and are enjoying the benefits of their exploitation in a guilt-ridden, lily-white community removed from the scene of their crimes against humanity.¹ Therefore, exploitation and detachment are seen as being the major inhuman characteristics of the suburbanite.

It is also worth noting here that many Black Americans view the suburbanite in much the same way as do the members of the Ecumenical Institute. They, too, feel exploited by whites who live outside the Black community and who come into it in order to earn their livelihood, often charging excessive or above-average prices for goods, services, and rent, and who take this money out to suburbia to continue their racist tendencies.

The issue is not only that whites own almost all of the inner city, but that they also *control* almost all of it *politically*. Therefore, part of the quest for Black Power is for Black owners to replace these white owners, and also for Black residents to acquire political control of their communities. In this way it is felt that the money and other resources acquired by Black persons will not be funneled out

¹This statement was made at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago during its Summer 1968 session by one of its staff members on July 4, 1968.

into some white community but will be *kept in* the Black community because the same people who sell there will also buy and live there and will have more of a personal stake in the development and growth of the community as a whole. However, it is both recognized and admitted that some Black entrepreneurs are as guilty of exploiting their Black brothers as are some white entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, there is a growing feeling of unity and mutual concern in the Black community and those who attempt to remain outside this trend have often found themselves ostracized, boycotted, blacklisted, and even assaulted by some of their abused Black brothers. This point is illustrated by reports during the recent riots in Los Angeles, Detroit, and elsewhere where Afro-Americans who operated businesses in the Black community were singled-out or identified as persons who charged as much as thirty per cent more for groceries and other goods and services than did white downtown merchants, and many of these businesses were destroyed, intentionally and systematically, in spite of the owners placing signs in their store windows which read "brother" or "soul brother."

To turn again to the cultural aspect of this matter, it is also the conviction of many Black persons of Afro-American descent in the United States that they must deny their cultural heritage and become as much like the white man as possible -- in appearance (so far as straightening their hair, trying to lighten their complexion with bleaching creams) and in trying to acquire as many of the white man's values and mannerisms as possible in order to be a real person.² In

²Stated during the Summer 1968 session by a staff pedagogue at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago on July 2, 1968.

other words, many of these persons feel that they cannot be Black and also be a person, but that they have to try to hide their blackness and deny their cultural heritage and identity and deny their kinship with other persons of Afro-American descent in order to be a real person and be accepted in what they see as a white world. In a word, these people believe it is *bad* to be Black and good only to be white! More will be said about this point in the next chapter, where we shall deal with the aims, goals, and accomplishments of the Institute's Fifth City Reformulation Project.

The Institute's Concept of the New Style of Humanness it Hopes to Create

The new man that the Ecumenical Institute hopes will be produced by their efforts will be a man who is future-oriented (as opposed to one who tries to live in the past and hold on to the status quo), one who is willing to risk making decisions and taking responsibility for them, one who is willing to determine his own destiny and who seeks to become a moral man in the Institute's sense of being aware of, concerned about, and involved in helping to change the situations and perplexities of life which affect all mankind. In a word, the Institute calls this type of person a "FIC" man -- i.e., one who is *futuristic, intentional, and comprehensive*.³

On the international scene, this new style of humanness would include helping people around the world who have a negative self-image

³*Ibid.*

and low self-esteem and who are limited politically, economically, and socially to become aware of their psychological, sociological, and ontological needs, to become determined to change these conditions, and to develop the tools, plan and implement courses of action which would lead to an end to their dejection and suppression.

The same solution is suggested for the cultural and structural problems in the inner city. Here again, the first concern is cultural or imaginal -- i.e., to help these people to shatter the negative self-images they have of themselves, to help them realize that they can change their condition by their own efforts, and help them to develop the expertise and power to do so.

As the Institute sees it, the inner city is the key to the revitalization and rehumanization of the city in the United States because it holds up the depth image of what our society is really like.⁴ It is held that the Black writers (especially since 1963) have shown the white man the inaccuracy of his image of the Black man and has also shown him how white Americans in the United States have been treating the whole world -- especially people of non-Western cultures.⁵ It is therefore held that it is now time for the white man in the United States to respond creatively to what he sees in himself by forging a new image of himself. However, it is perhaps not so much the case that white man is *deciding* to forge a new image of himself as it is the case that the

⁴From notes taken during the 1968 Summer Conference at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago on July 4, 1968.

⁵*Ibid.*

Black man's new image of himself is *forcing* the white man to realize that he cannot think and act toward the Black man as he did previously, and also that this realization *forces* the white man to realize that he has to change his image of *himself* as well as his image of the *Black man*.

As forestated, the Institute sees the inner city (the Black man) as the *key* to city renewal, but at the same time it sees the suburbanite (the white middle-class American) as the *lock* to city renewal.⁶ As to this latter point, the crucial matter, as the Institute sees it, is that the white man in the United States in general, and the white man in suburbia in particular, needs a new mindset -- i.e., he needs to create a more realistic image of himself as well as of the Black man. Although this new mindset is presently being forced upon him by the new Black man, he continues vigorously to resist it. Therefore, the Institute sees as indispensable that the white suburbanite face up to his responsibility for creating the sub-human conditions which exist in the city for the Black man and help the Black man improve his situation by removing the obstacles that he, the white American, has put in his path.

The Institute sees the necessary reformulation process in suburbia as essentially cultural. This cultural reformulation is seen as including the economic, symbolic, stylistic, educational, and political life of the suburbanite. The following chart graphically illustrates the Institute's concept of some of the major economic, symbolic, stylistic, educational, and political problems with which suburbanites must deal as

⁶*Ibid.*

<u>ECONOMIC</u>	<u>SYMBOLIC</u>	<u>STYLISTIC</u>	<u>EDUCATIONAL</u>	<u>POLITICAL</u>
(Individual) Vocational--loss of meaning of work.	(Individual) No ontological grounding. Ex. Not global, cross-cultural, universal.	(Individual) "Drifting"--lack of realistic and purposeful values.	(Individual) Primarily for job title, money, prestige.	(Individual) Paralysis of vision--afraid of power.
(Family) Tyranny of values. Ex. Prestige, success, status, money.	(Family) The Church. Ex. "Cultural Christianity."--"Baptizing the 'good life' as Christian."	(Family) Bourgeois--"good life." Thing-oriented. Leisure time, join clubs.	(Family) Inadequate for world living--too "ingrown"	(Family) Isolated from large portion of life--Ex. family-oriented.
(City) Split off from general society.	(City) Illusions-- Ex. "The good life is life of municipal peace, progress.	(City) Escape from pressures. Call communities "Harmony Hill," etc.	(City) Intellectual abstractionism-- Ex. Try to avoid concrete problems and situations.	(City) Many non-entities, i.e., "nobodies."
(World) Live off rest of world--consumers.	(World) Celebrate provincialism, i.e., "it's great to be white," love U.S. Flag.	(World) Benevolent charity -- i.e., Believe in giving temporary help (do-good-ism).	(World) Rational-technical bias-- i.e., want to be technicians in order to earn more money.	(World) Defensiveness-- lack of interest in politics.

Reproduced from chart made at the 1968 Summer Conference at Chicago, July 4, 1968.

individuals, families, and citizens of cities and of the world.

Most of these points seem generally and relatively substantiable, but at least one is highly questionable. It might be difficult to substantiate the thesis that suburbanites are generally or mostly non-political oriented or lack interest in politics in view of the high percentage of suburbanites who vote in elections as compared to non-suburbanites, and also in view of their involvement in politics in suburbia as well as in the inner city. It might even be possible to substantiate the thesis that many (or even most) cities in the United States are controlled politically as well as economically by persons who live in suburban communities. At any rate, this particular point is highly questionable.

One of the terms frequently used by the Ecumenical Institute is *revolution*. According to one of the Institute's staff members, the term refers to "the complete alteration of humanness."⁷ This complete alteration of humanness is deemed necessary because it is held that the individuals and institutions and other structures which influence our lives have caused our humanness to be deformed or perverted rather than enhanced and developed. It is therefore held that in order to reformulate our primordial life styles, the old styles and models must be completely altered.

This new style of humanness is related to the Ecumenical Institute's concept of being. In fact, it is suggested by the Institute

⁷This definition was given by George Holkum on July 1, 1968 at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

that being implies *being human* or developing one's humanity to its full potential.⁸ Being is seen, therefore, as the result of the wedding of knowing and doing. Hence, the formula knowing plus doing equals being ($K + D = B$) is deduced.⁹ *Knowing* is seen as a rational phenomenon, *doing* as the intentional response to this rationality, and *being* as the continuous and discontinuous results, which is seen as the irrational consequences of knowing and doing.¹⁰ Hence, *knowing* is seen as a priestly experience and function, *doing* as vocational, and *being* as perpetual struggle.¹¹

In order to explicate this point, the significance of the *method*, *ur*, and *style* of being is explored. The *method* of being is seen as the efforts to solidify one's lucidity. Placed in the religious context out of which the Ecumenical Institute operates, the method of being includes transparent discontinuity, contemplation, meditation, and prayer. On the other hand, the *ur* of being is examined in the three basic primordial *ur* images found in the Eastern, Western, and Southern hemispheres, respectively. Finally, the *style* of being, which hopefully emerges, is that of a free human being who is lucid, open, and sensitive to life, disciplined and ready to become an "iron man," which the Institute defines as a spirit revolutionary dedicated to bringing about the

⁸*I.E.* (September 1968), 10, 11. A newsletter published by the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

⁹From lecture and discussion at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago on July 3, 1968.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹From lecture and discussion at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago on July 17, 1968.

complete alteration of humanness throughout the world by helping persons to shatter their illusions about life, their false conceptions of themselves, and be challenged to help develop the type of individuals, institutions, and other constructs, as well as to create new structures where necessary, to deal with the welter of imaginal, cultural, economic, educational, and political problems which plague and dehumanize the people of the world.¹²

The *style* of being, as described by the Ecumenical Institute, is visualized in three basic phenomena: the college, the league, and the guru. The *college* is seen as a body of persons dedicated to the pursuit of being and also as the arena in which the struggle for being or achieving full humanness takes place.¹³ The *league* is seen as the "nobodies," that is, the anonymous and inconspicuous persons who inspire, motivate, and pave the way for others to achieve human potential and even greatness.¹⁴ On the other hand, the *guru* is the "spirit man" or "holy man" who is the intensification of knowing and doing and thus the embodiment and personification of being.¹⁵

It is significant to note that the attempt to alter and reformulate the nature and style of humanness is not the result of mere contemplation and speculation, but arises out of the present cultural revolution which is evident in all parts of the world. Because of the urban, scientific, and technological developments of the Twentieth Century, the general mindset of man as well as his pattern of living

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵*Ibid.*

have changed considerably. Specifically, the developments of science and technology have been crucial factors in the de-ruralization and almost complete urbanization of today's world. This factor, along with many others, has resulted in a shift in the mindset and style of living of Twentieth Century man. Moreover, this shift in man's mindset and style of living has resulted in the rudimentary alteration of humanness. Since the nature and the style of humanness around the world is already in a state of transition, it is the conviction of the Ecumenical Institute that since this change is already taking place, and since many individuals and groups will be offering new models for the new humanity that is emerging, it has the opportunity as well as the responsibility to project a model which it sees as viable, functional, and necessary for the physical, mental, and spiritual survival and development of mankind.

One of the most poignant statements that comes out of the Institute's attempt to alter and reformulate the styles of human personality is the recognition that

Previous revolutions in recent centuries have focused on the political or economic dimensions of social existence. But today's upheaval is foundational. Therefore it is called a *cultural* revolution. Through it, man is being reconstituted.... Man lives by his self images. To change the images is to change the man. In a sense, he is nothing but his self images. A new human being is emerging from the present radical cultural transformation. For man is creating new concepts in common sense, new patterns of social relations, new symbols of human mode.... This is occasioned by and manifested in the present world-wide scientific revolution, the world-wide urban revolution, and the world-wide secular revolution. This inescapable trinity comprises the cultural upheaval. To understand contemporary man is to grasp this tri-dimensional revolution.¹⁶

¹⁶*Image* (October 31, 1967), 6. A magazine published by the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

In the Institute's attempt to alter and reformulate the present mode and style of primordial existence, the need is seen for what it calls a "new religious mode" and a "new social vehicle."¹⁷ Both of these phenomena refer to a renewal of the Christian Church which will give birth to a new breed of believers who will *exemplify* this new religious mode and *be* this new social vehicle.¹⁸ It must be added that this new religious mode is seen as relating more to the *knowing* pole of being and the new social vehicle more to the *doing* pole of being.

In the *process* of becoming and exemplifying the new religious mode and the new social vehicle, one must embrace what the Institute designates as the "four-fold nobility."¹⁹ These include what it calls the four noble *truths*, the four noble *deeds*, the four noble *awes*, and the four noble *styles*. The four noble *truths* are: all is *good*, all is *received*, all is *approved*, and all is *possible*. These convictions are related to the Institute's contention that in spite of one's imperfections, his unloveliness, and his seeming unworthiness, in the sight of God, he is accepted. On the other hand, the four noble *deeds* are: act on behalf of all the *past*, all the *present*, and all the *future*, and do the deed that absolves all of one's being. Doing the deed is also commonly referred to by the Institute as "the cruciform response" or as "deciding to die one's death" by giving one's life to a specific task in the spirit revolution -- i.e., the cultural revolution or revolution

¹⁷From lecture and discussion at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago, 1968 Summer Conference.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹*Ibid.*

in the nature and style of humanness.²⁰ It is also held that doing the deed enables one to *re-decide* every decision that has been made in the *past*, *decide* on the course of events for the *present*, and in so doing make decisions now that others in the *future* will have to remake.

The four noble *awe's* are: the *other*, the *self*, the *primordial*, and the *not yet*. In this conception, the awe or mystery of being and becoming are recognized and expressed. Finally, the four noble *styles* are: to be *inclusive*, *intentional*, *archaic*, and *futuristic*. This idea embraces the notion of being comprehensive and decisive about one's knowing and doing as he learns from the *past* and does his deed in the *present* for the present as well as for the *future*. The Institute incorporates three of these styles in the phrase, "FIC" -- which refers to being *futuristic*, *intentional*, and *comprehensive*.²¹

In light of the foregoing description of the new man that the Institute seeks to create, it may be summarized that they are seeking to produce a self-accepting, self-reflecting, self-developing, self-disciplined, sensitive, lucid, involved, intentional, and comprehensive being who will seek and find his primary mission or vocation in life and totally dedicate himself to fulfilling it. In short, the Institute is seeking to create a man who is at once image-breaking and image-creating, free and obedient, religious and secular, individual and corporate, evolutionary and revolutionary.

As one reflects upon the nature and character of this new man that the Ecumenical Institute seeks to help emerge, it is evident that the

²⁰*Ibid.*

²¹*Ibid.*

necessity for image-reformulation is seen as existing equally for the oppressed peoples of the United States and the world and for those doing the oppressing, for the reshaping of the image of one affects, even *forces* the reshaping of the image of the other. For example: as the Black man in America continues to acquire and develop a new image of himself -- an image of dignity and self-determination, an image which shatters the old negative images he had of himself as well as the false images the white man had of him as a childish, helpless, shiftless, lazy, non-enterprising, self-dejecting, gullible creature, the white man himself *must* change not only his image of the Black man but also his image of himself because it is impossible to think of oneself as superior and the Black man as inferior when the new Black man challenges these concepts by openly and blatantly defying them in word and deed. These new concepts and reactions force a crisis of re-assessment in the white man of his own image and compels him to recognize that what was *felt*, *believed*, and *assumed* as his "place" and the place of the Black man is no longer feasible.

Perhaps, one of the most positive psychological as well as sociological values to come out of the new Black man's response to white aggression and suppression has been his decision to respond with direct confrontation and in self-defense instead of acquiescence and nonviolence. For example: it might be noted that acquiescence and nonviolence gained the Black man the sympathy of many guilt-ridden whites, but at the same time, the fact that he was still acquiescing and docile caused him to still be considered a non-self-asserting and non-self-affirming being. While, on the other hand, to respond to aggression with aggression and

to respond to repression with physical confrontation forces the oppressor to recognize that he is dealing with a *human being* who has feelings and power and is willing to assert them. In other words, this causes the aggressor to *affirm* the dignity and humanity of his nemesis.

Whereas the method of acquiescence and nonviolence may work on the *conscience* of the aggressor and raise the level of public outrage, the method of self-defense and confrontation commands a *halt* to the violence of the aggressor. Therefore, it may be postulated that the method of the new Black man may have at least this one advantage over the method of nonviolence.

However, it may also be the case that as a result of the new Black man taking the posture of self-defense, many whites who would be sympathetic to his plight and to his cause if he were more docile (non-violent) may either *join* his aggressors or remain neutral. But the question boils down to this: if the Black man remains nonviolent, he will earn the "*respect*" (or pity) of many *whites*; if he defends his dignity and his rights, he will be able to *respect himself*! Therefore, the choice of an increasing number of Black Americans is that they would rather have *self-respect* than *white-respect*, that they would rather assert themselves and earn the *respect* of their Black brothers than to remain docile and earn the *pity* of so-called white men of good will because their guilt is accentuated and their conscience is seared.

The Institute's attempt to reformulate humanness then, might be said to be both evolutionary *and* revolutionary. For those who have a dejected, defeatist attitude which manifests itself in a negative self-concept and the concept of oneself as a helpless *victim* of society, there

must be a great deal of *evolutionary* negative image-breaking and a decision to be determined to change not only one's self-concept but also one's human destiny *before* the cultural and structural *revolutions* become actualized.

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter was to seek to establish the centrality of the alteration, reformulation, and development of human existence in the philosophy of the Ecumenical Institute and to examine its concept of the present style of human existence as well as its concept of the projected style of human existence it seeks to create.

It was noted that the desire on the part of the members of the Ecumenical Institute to reformulate the present style of human existence stems from two key factors: the first is that the present style of human existence is already changing in light of the rapid advancement of science and technology, and the fact that urbanization is swiftly replacing ruralization throughout the world. In light of the already evolutionary nature and style of man, it is the conviction of the members of the Ecumenical Institute that they have the right as well as the responsibility to project an image of the new humanity they would like to see evolve by the turn of the century.

Secondly, although the Institute sees the cultural evolution as foundational to the formulation of the new man, it also sees the necessity for this new being to take command of his own destiny by working to shape and remold the institutions and other structures which presently either limit or deter the formation of a new humanity so that there will

not only be an ontological and cultural *evolution*, but also a structural and social *revolution* which will enable the new humanity to not only *emerge* but also to *develop*.

The global image that the Institute has of humanity in general is that people see themselves as being either exploiters or the exploited and therefore create and develop insufficient images of themselves. The exploiters are held to view themselves as superior beings and the exploited see themselves as inferior beings. Therefore, it is the conviction of the Ecumenical Institute that the Christ-event -- i.e., that which shatters one's illusions about himself, about his fellow man, and about life in general is as necessary to one group as to the other, and that when this image-shattering and remolding has taken place, men will see themselves and each other in a more realistic and positive light and will therefore work to change the structures and institutions in every society which limit men from developing their human potential.

CHAPTER IV

THE THEOLOGY OF THE PROGRAM OF THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE: CHICAGO

In this chapter we shall seek to establish the centrality of the alteration and reformulation of humanness in the theology of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago, and show the relationship of the Institute's central theological affirmations to the reformulation and development of humanness. In examining the Institute's attempt to reformulate humanness we shall endeavor to substantiate the thesis that their doctrines of God, Christ, the Spirit, and the Church come more from their attempt to alter the present style of human existence than from the views of the theologians they use in formulating their theological position. The material for this chapter shall be drawn from the notes taken at the Institute during its 1968 Summer Conference as well as from the abstracts they use from the works of Paul Tillich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Rudolf Bultmann, and H. Richard Niebuhr. The procedure will be to point out the relationship of the Institute's concept of God, Christ, the Spirit, and the Church to the development of humanness.

The Relation of the Central Theological Affirmations to the Alteration, Reformulation, and Development of Humanness

According to the Institute's interpretation of history, the Twentieth Century theological revolution and the renewal of the Christian

Church began with Karl Barth in 1917.¹ However, there is no explanation of this point in the Institute's literature. Therefore, one is left to assume how they see Barth as ushering in the turning point in theology and hence, the incunabula of the renewal of the church. Nevertheless, Joseph Mathews, dean of the Institute, states that

The social gospel movement, up until the 1920's, was the creative end of another age. For the next 30 years the tendency was to analyze the illness of the church through psychology. We now use sociological categories. Today we need the courage and the power to interpret the meaning of humanness, the meaning of faith, in terms of a new kind of world view.²

As the members of the Institute see it, the basic course in their curriculum, religious studies 1 (RS-1), deals with life -- i.e., the realities that face every human being. The stated purpose of the course is to show what life is all about, from the abstract to the concrete. Accordingly, it is held that people will be confronted with objective reality. The *structure* of this reality, and thus the *structure* of life itself, is related to the symbols *God, Christ, and Spirit*.³

The sources for dealing with these theological symbols include abstracts from Bultmann's *Crisis of Faith*, Tillich's *You Are Accepted*, H. Richard Niebuhr's *The Church as Social Pioneer*, *The Purpose of the Church*, and *The Nature and Existence of God*, Bonhoeffer's *Freedom and Community*, H. B. Sissel's *The Church in Culture*, and Joseph W. Mathews'

¹Reprinted from *Together* (October 1966). A magazine published by the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

²*Ibid.*

³From lecture and discussion at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago during the 1968 Summer Conference.

The Christ of History and Common Worship in the Life of the Church.

In light of the plethora of material that is used by the Institute in dealing with their central theological affirmations, the following methodology will be used. We shall project and critique some of the central affirmations about God, Christ, the Spirit, and the Church and relate them to the Institute's attempt to alter, reformulate, and develop the nature and style of primordial existence.

In order to relate the concepts of God, Christ, the Spirit, and the Church to the development of humanness, the members of the Ecumenical Institute felt the necessity to strip these symbols of much of their mythology and abstractness and reinterpret them in light of the concrete, existential situations which they feel are applicable and relevant to people in all cultures.

The traditional Christian trinity of *God, Christ, and the Spirit*, when concretized and demythologized by the Ecumenical Institute, correspond to and are congruent with the concepts *community, symbols, and individuals*.

a) The Concept of God. In light of the material abstracted from *The Crisis of Faith* by Rudolph Bultmann, the following ideas about and concepts of God have evolved in the theology of the Ecumenical Institute: (1) whatever you consider of ultimate value is God, (2) God is the mystery or phenomenon which limits man, yet holds man responsible, (3) God sets the terminus to man's knowing and doing, (4) God calls man to duty, (5) God gives man thoughts and strength and places him in the struggle between self-assertion and duty, (6) God is the power behind

time, yet masters the temporal, and (7) God is the power which limits and controls man's future.⁴

These concepts of God relate to what the Institute holds to be among the qualities of the new man in that the new man is to consider himself and every other man to be of inestimable value. The new man is to be a responsible being in the sense of not only recognizing his *kinship* to all mankind but also holding himself *responsible* for his own personal destiny and well-being as well as for the destiny and well-being of his fellow man. At the same time, the new man is to be accountable to other men because of his concern for them and his involvement in the events and situations of life which are produced as a result of man being a network of relationships with other men. As a result of this, it is held that he therefore should and must accept his individual and corporate responsibility as a part of this relationship.

A closer look at these affirmations about God discloses that each affirmation about God, with the probable exception of one, is at least partially applicable to man -- especially to the new man that the Institute hopes to create.

The concept of God as being of ultimate value is not at all strange nor untenable. For example, the proverbial view of God in the thought of Paul Tillich is that God is that which concerns us ultimately. Also, H. Richard Niebuhr contends that God is that which makes life

⁴From the Institute's abstract of Rudolph Bultmann's *Crisis of Faith* as well as from lectures and discussion at the Institute during the 1968 Summer Conference.

worth living.⁵ And Luther is reported to have postulated that "What-ever then the heart clings to ... and relies upon, that is properly thy God."⁶ Hence, there is no apparent difficulty among many who stand within the Christian tradition (as well as some who stand outside it) to hold the view that whatever one considers of ultimate value is his god. Therefore, since the new man is to consider other men as well as himself to be of ultimate or inestimable value, the Institute sees this characteristic as one of the cardinal characteristics of the new humanity which it seeks to help create.

The assertion that God is the mystery or phenomenon which limits man yet holds man responsible is quite interesting. In the first place, it may be established that that which limits man is his *finitude*, and that which holds man responsible may be either his personal *integrity* or *other men*. In this sense, then, one would not have to conceive of anything beyond man in order to call it god. Therefore, the mystery or phenomenon which limits man and holds him responsible may simply be man himself. Evidently, this is the position which the Ecumenical Institute takes, at least in part, because the concept of individual and corporate responsibility is held high as one of the qualities of the new human being.

When we look at the third concept, that God is that which sets a terminus to man's knowing and doing, we again may well see this terminus-

⁵From the Institute's abstract of H. Richard Niebuhr's *The Nature and Existence of God*, 4.

⁶*Ibid.*

setter as man himself; for again it is man's *finitude*, his physiological and psychological *limitations*, which set a terminus to his knowing and doing. It follows then, in the logic of the Ecumenical Institute, that being responsible and accountable to other men likewise sets a terminus to one's functioning as merely an individual and in so doing enhances one's *being*, which the Institute defines as the product of man's *knowing* and *doing*.

In the fourth place, it is held that God calls man to duty. Bultmann clearly states that that which calls man to duty is the "VOICE OF CONSCIENCE,"⁷ which, again, might simply be the voice of man to man. In the fifth place, he who "gives man thoughts and strength to work, and who places him in the eternal struggle between self-assertion and duty"⁸ may, at least in part, be man himself and his continuous struggle to survive. Likewise, the power which limits man and controls his future is his finitude, the decisions he makes, and how the decisions he makes and the decisions other men make interact with and affect each other. Hence, all of these qualities: the inestimable value of man, man as a responsible and accountable being to his fellow man, man seen as limited by his own humanity as well as by the laws and other limits of other men, and man as a finite, decision-maker who attempts to fuse his *knowing* and *doing* in order to enhance his *being*, are all marks of the new humanity which the Ecumenical Institute hopes to produce.

⁷From the Institute's abstract of Bultmann's *Crisis of Faith*, 2.

⁸*Ibid.*, 3.

As to the last assertion: that God is the power behind time, yet masters the temporal, it must be conceded that only here, in the postulations that have been advanced, does the power alluded to clearly extend beyond man to something or someone beyond himself. For, clearly, man is not the power behind time and does not completely master anything. In fact, although God may be said to be the *power behind time*, it would be quite preposterous to hold that even God masters the temporal. Obviously, if this were the case, man would not really be a decision-making being and would not exercise control over his own destiny. Therefore, this latter part of this postulation by Bultmann seems untenable. However, we might not understand all that Bultmann means by the phrase "temporal."

b) The Concept of Christ. The concept of Christ in the thought of the Ecumenical Institute, may be expressed by two propositions:

- (1) To have your *illusions* about life *shattered* is the *Christ-event*, and
- (2) searching for a *philosophy of life* is searching for a *messiah*.⁹

This concept of Christ relates to the imaginal education work of the Institute because it seeks on the one hand to *shatter* the negative *self-images* and *victim-images* as well as seeks to convince people that they are the *masters*, not the *victims*, of their fate or destiny, and, on the other hand, it seeks to challenge the values and illusions that many suburbanites, and other bourgeois or middle-class persons have of equating success or failure in life only in terms of dollars and cents

⁹From lectures and discussions at the Institute's pastors' seminar at White Sulphur Springs on March 1, 1967.

as well as the false hope and illusion that similarity in values, attitudes, and goals necessarily breeds acceptance. And, of course, there is the great god, *harmony*, which many of these persons *seek in vain* and *worship* in spite of their inability to find him. It is these types of "illusions" which the Institute believes the Christ-event "shatters."

Likewise, the Institute contends that searching for a philosophy of life -- i.e., something to *live by* or even to *die for* is the perennial quest for a messiah (or partial panacea) which will *answer* the deep questions and *solve* the deep problems of mankind.

Joseph W. Mathews, dean of the Ecumenical Institute, distinguishes between what he calls "The Every-man-Christ" and "The Jesus-Christ-Event."¹⁰ The former refers to the concept that every man can and should become a christ, a messiah -- i.e., one anointed by God to perform a specific function or task in the world. This concept is akin to the notion that the Incarnation must continuously take place -- i.e., the *Word* (in this case, as the Ecumenical Institute sees it, the word that all is *accepted, good, approved, possible*) must continuously be manifested in the lives of men of faith.

On the other hand, the latter statement by Mathews relates to the historical Jesus and his role as the Christ of God during a specific time in history for a specific mission and to the illusion-shattering event that even now continues to take place in the life of individuals. Mathews sums up his article with the statement attributed to Luther that

¹⁰Joseph Mathews, *The Christ of History* (Chicago: The Ecumenical Institute, undated), 1-4.

"Christians are to be little Christs."¹¹ This statement clearly places the concept of messiah in the role of every man having the opportunity and responsibility to be the present living embodiment of the word of hope and acceptance which stems from the Gospel message. It must be noted, however, that the two propositions mentioned do not tell *why* having your illusions about life shattered is the Christ-event nor *why* searching for a philosophy of life is searching for a messiah. As it stands, these two postulations simply seem to reflect the Institute's remythologized, concrete, existential manifestations or examples of what is, or at least should be, embodied in the symbol Christ.

c) The Concept of the Spirit. The concept of the Spirit or the Spirit of God is connected with the concept of God. God, in the thought of the Ecumenical Institute, is a mysterious enigma who is seen as one looks at himself, others, the past, and the future.¹² God is seen as one who is beyond being, although he participates in being.¹³ The remythologized concept of the Spirit of God as here offered by the Ecumenical Institute places this symbol in the context of human destiny and activity, and the *Spirit* is therefore seen as *individuals* diffused throughout the world who bear the marks of the new humanity and who carry the burden of helping create and develop this new concept of the

¹¹*Ibid.*, 10.

¹²From lectures and notes during the pastors' seminar conducted by the Ecumenical Institute at White Sulphur Springs, St. Helena, California, February 28, 1967.

¹³From abstract of Bultmann's *Crisis of Faith*, 3.

Spirit in the minds and lives of men everywhere.

The trinity of life, the Institute contends, is the *community*, *symbols*, and *individuals*, which correspond to and is congruent with the symbols *God*, *Christ*, *Spirit*.¹⁴ Therefore, the Spirit is held to be the community of individuals who are lucid, free, and sensitive, and exposed to the imaginal, cultural, structural, and institutional needs and problems of others and are willing to risk themselves in attempting to meet these needs and solve these problems.¹⁵

d) The Concept of the Church. Since the renewal of the Church is the ultimate goal of the Ecumenical Institute (through the local congregation), a great deal of its work is focused upon the evolution of the concept of the Church as well as model-building for forging a new image of the individual, the Church, the community and for society as a whole.

In developing and dealing with its Ecclesiology, the Institute relies to a great extent upon the thought of H. Richard Niebuhr. Therefore, in order to get to the heart of some of the underlying concepts and presuppositions about the Church, we shall briefly explore and examine some of the major tenets of Niebuhr regarding the nature and purpose of the Christian Church.

In the first place, Niebuhr sees the Church as a pioneer

... which responds first to God-in-Christ and Christ-in-God. It is the sensitive and responsive part in every society and mankind as a whole.... In its relations with God it is the pioneer part of society

¹⁴From discussion of Bultmann's *Crisis of Faith*.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

that responds to God on behalf of the whole society.... In this representational sense the church is that part of human society, and that element in each particular society, which moves toward God, which as the priest acting for all men worship Him, which believes and trusts in him on behalf of all, which is first to obey Him when it becomes aware of a new aspect of his will.¹⁶

In the second place, Niebuhr sees the church as "the first to repent for all the sins of a society and it repents on behalf of all.... It repents for the sin of the whole society and leads in the societal act of repentance."¹⁷ He recognizes that

In our time, with its dramatic revelations of the evils of nationalism, racism and of economic imperialism it is the evident responsibility of the Church to repudiate these attitudes within itself and to act as the pioneer of society in doing so. The apostolic proclamation of good and bad news to the colored races without a pioneering repudiation of racial discrimination in the Church contains a note of insincerity and unbelief. The prophetic denunciation of nationalism without a resolute rejection of nationalism in the Church is most rhetorical. As the representative and pioneer of mankind the Church meets its social responsibility when in its own thinking, organization and action it functions as a world society, undivided by race, class and national interests.¹⁸

By way of further explicating this point, Niebuhr is quite emphatic in pointing out that

This seems to be the highest form of social responsibility in the Church. It is the direct demonstration of love of God and neighbor rather than a repetition of the commandments to self and others. It is the radical demonstration of faith. Where this responsibility is being exercised there is no longer any question about the reality of the Church. In pioneering and representative action of response to God in Christ the invisible Church becomes visible and the deed of Christ is reduplicated.¹⁹

Finally, in the Institute's abstract from Niebuhr's work on *The Purpose of the Church*, Niebuhr sees the Church's purpose simply as to

¹⁶Abstract of H. Richard Niebuhr's *The Church as Social Pioneer*, 1.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹*Ibid.*

increase our love of God and neighbor.²⁰ The neighbor, he says,

... is the near one and the far one; the one beside the road I travel here and now; the one removed from me by distances in time and space, in convictions and loyalties.²¹

However, Niebuhr neglects to specify *how* this love of God and neighbor is to be demonstrated. He seems to be content with just defining *who* the neighbor is and leaves one to *assume* what his specific relationship and response to the neighbor should be.

As the members of the Institute reflect upon these and other concepts of the Church, they have deduced that the four-fold mission or purpose of the Church is to participate in *worship, study, planning, and action*. However, they see the perversions which have emerged in this four-fold purpose, and therefore seek to make this mission more meaningful and relevant to our contemporary world. In so doing, much emphasis is placed upon discarding much of the spectatorness in worship by engaging in experimental forms of worship which are participation-oriented. Furthermore, there is a conscious attempt not to limit worship to the more rationalistic, pietistic, and subdued expressions where mainly just the mind is involved, but to include body movements, hand-clapping, and other expressions which seek to wed the more "rational" with the less "rational"; or, better still, to wed the *rational* with the *more than rational*. Moreover, each member of the worshipping community has the right and is given the responsibility to lead in the service of worship, therefore modifying much of the clergy-laity dichotomy which now exists. As the Institute sees it, the minister, if the distinction

²⁰*Ibid.*, 9.

²¹*Ibid.*, 8.

continues to be made between pastor and people, will be seen more as a *catalyst* and as an *enabler* who presides over the forum which decides the goals and strategies for each local congregation, rather than as *the* leader or *the* minister. In this way, the ministry of the Church will be *shared* by the entire body, with each member being a priest or pastor to his fellow members as well as to the world.²²

Christian education also is viewed as rather abortive since it usually seeks to engage one in study for the sake of study rather than for the sake of planning for action and thereby equipping one to be a servant in the world. More will be said about the Institute's concept of Christian education and its attempt to alter and re-structure the purpose and method of Christian education in the next chapter.

Central to the development of the new style of the local congregation and therefore the renewal of the Church is that these congregations which make up the Church will be covenanting communities. The idea of having a covenant and being a covenanting community includes *discipline*, *rule*, and *accountability*. It is held that there is no *discipline* without a *covenant*, and no *covenant* without a *rule*. The *rule* is defined as understanding and actualizing what the covenant is. The "Word" (all is *good*, *approved*, *received*, and *possible*) is the basis of that *rule*. In making decisions, the "consensus rule" is followed in that the community first *discusses* and then *decides* when there is a *consensus of opinion* on a particular proposal or course of action.²³

²²From lectures and discussions at the Institute's pastors' seminar at White Sulphur Springs on March 1, 1967.

²³*Ibid.*

Furthermore, it is held that there is no *rule* without *accountability*. As the members of the Institute see it, *accountability* enables one to follow through on his task and when he is asked to *account* for his carrying out a particular task or assignment, the honest answer is "yes and no" or "no and yes," because of the ambiguities involved. If one answers "yes and no," it means that so far as he is concerned, he did more to carry out his assignment than not to carry it out. The converse is true for the opposite answer. For example, one might be asked: "Have you been faithful to your marriage covenant since you made it?" If one feels that he has been more faithful than not, his answer will be "yes and no." If he feels that he has been less faithful than he could have been and should have been, then his answer will be "no and yes." It is maintained that the rule is *fixed* but can and does get *broken*.²⁴

In response to questions regarding how rules of discipline and accountability and developing a "corporate mind" relate to the expression of individuality, it is maintained that corporateness *draws out* individuality, rather than *limits* it.²⁵ However, it seems that it would be more accurate to say that corporateness helps "create" a *new kind* of individuality rather than that it *draws out* one's "existing" individuality. For it seems quite clear that in relating to and interacting with other selves one's individuality is not *drawn out* but *shaped*!

The Institute's demythologized and remythologized concepts of God, Christ, the Spirit, and the Church were selectively drawn from the

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵*Ibid.*

theologians used and applied to the Institute's concept of the evolutionary and revolutionary stance of the new humanity they seek to create. Therefore, as a result of this, it might be postulated that the Institute's concepts of God, Christ, the Spirit, and the Church stem more from their concepts of the new humanity than they do simply from the material they abstracted from the theologians they cited. Again, it must be noted that although the Institute's attempt to reformulate the present modes of human existence stem from their theological reflection, it does so because of the already changing patterns of human life as a result of the scientific, technological, secular, and urban revolutions which are sweeping the world.

Summary and Conclusions

The demythologized and existential concepts of God, Christ, the Spirit, and the Church are created and developed by the Ecumenical Institute with the intention of fostering the creation and development of the Institute's envisioned and projected humanity. In this chapter, therefore, we lifted up certain characteristics of the Institute's remythologized concepts of God, Christ, the Spirit, and the Church as well as some of their concepts of the new humanity that they draw from these theological symbols.

The fact that the Institute sees the necessity to be highly selective of the theological concepts they extract from the thought of the theologians they cite, and that they also see the necessity to further demythologize some of Bultmann's concepts of God and to remythologize some of the thought of H. Richard Niebuhr and others, illustrates

the thesis that their doctrines of God, Christ, the Spirit, and the Church (when applied to the new man) become more of a creation of their own concept of what should and must eventually emerge as the nature, characteristics, and style of the new humanity than merely statements of these theologians regarding the doctrines mentioned.

It is interesting that none of the theological abstracts obtained from the Ecumenical Institute dealt specifically, primarily, nor exclusively with the doctrine of man but rather with a re-interpretation of man in light of a re-interpretation of the symbols God, Christ, the Spirit, and the Church. It would seem that a humanity reformulating oriented group would be more inclined to develop a doctrine of man and apply it to their concept of God rather than do the converse.

For the Ecumenical Institute, or for any other group, to undertake the task of attempting to completely alter and reformulate human existence is a most ambitious and noble undertaking. That the advancements in science and technology, the trend toward the total urbanization of the world, and that there do appear to be cultural revolutions (or evolutions) developing in all parts of the world which will affect the nature and destiny of man is undisputed. However, it is highly questionable that the style or type of life for man as projected by the Ecumenical Institute will emerge -- i.e., a style of life in which the most influential persons in the world (if not the masses themselves) will truly become and develop a new religious mode and a new social vehicle which will greatly penetrate every culture in the world. That the Ecumenical Institute has already made a great impact upon many persons is undeniable, and that it will probably make an impact on many more

persons is both possible and probable. But for it to (almost single-handedly) cause such a radical transformation in the majority of human beings throughout the world does not seem probable. However, history, specifically the year 2004, will determine the outcome of this projection.

CHAPTER V

THE PEDAGOGICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS AND METHODOLOGY OF THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE: CHICAGO

This chapter will deal with the relation of the Institute's pedagogical methodology and community reformulation project to the development of humanness. The material will be drawn primarily from the Institute's literature and from notes taken during its conferences. However, material will also be used from the works of various educators in critiquing in the pedagogical part of this chapter.

The Relation of the Pedagogical Presuppositions and Methodology to the Development of Humanness

It is held by the Ecumenical Institute that the purpose, method, and content of education must be radically changed in order to meet the needs of human beings in the Twentieth Century. The assertion runs as follows:

We have been living in a secular, scientific, and urban world since 1900. This realization has erased the image that study can be divorced from man's struggle with his psyche, with his social decision making, and his philosophical constructs. Serious intellectual study must be directly geared to the student's environment in his world.¹

As a result of the cultural and scientific revelations since the turn of the century, it is maintained that it is incumbent upon those who are serious about educating and being adequately educated for

¹Reprinted from *I.E.* (May 1967), 11. A magazine published by the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

involvement in our world to come to terms with the purpose, method, content, and perpetuality of education.

The 20th Century images of education, and methods to communicate the images, must be geared to our time and to our participation in the world. For the 20th Century man, education is a human process, continuing throughout his life, touching every aspect of his life. Education must be available to every man regardless of his age or previous educational opportunity. In order that every living creature be allowed to participate creatively and completely in the twentieth century world he must be permitted, from the cradle to the grave, to struggle with his own mental mutation and appropriate those necessary images which form his understanding of the world in which he lives.²

To illustrate this point, the Ecumenical Institute provides a chart which gives a model of possible educational emphases from nursery to older adult education. The chart on the following page illustrates this point.

Insofar as the content of education is concerned, it is held that the present religious as well as secular curricula are too limited and therefore must become more sociologically and ethnically comprehensive. This concern is reflected in the relatively comprehensive cultural studies curriculum of the Ecumenical Institute which was illustrated in chapter two as well as in the study of the various ur images and the accent being placed upon Afro-American and Mexican-American history and culture.

The Institute's methodology is fully demonstrated in its forty-four hour introductory course where it uses a combination of shock treatment, charting, voice manipulation, and imaginal education. The former refers to the frequent use of profanity, swear and curse words,

²*Ibid.*, 14.

CURRICULA			Struggle-Freedom-Desire-Change-Comprehension-Renewal									D E A T H	
			CHILD			YOUTH			ADULT				
			H To	1	1-3	3-5	5-8	8-12	12-18	18-25	25-65		65-
													H
B A S I C	Science	Physics Biology Math	Skills			Study			Teaching			T H E E D U C A T E D M A N	
	Philosophy	Analysis Existential Meta-Image	Language			Analytical Contemplation			Myths				
I N D I V I D.	Psychology	Biological Social Rational	Habits			Examination			Meaning				
	Art	Impression Expression Intentional	Creativity			Celebration			Rites				
S O C I A L	Sociology	Economic Political Cultural	Relations			Action			Structures				
	History	Objective Rational Existential	Anticipation			Confrontation			Symbols				
I M A G I N A L	Practice	Family Community World	Inclusive Images			Human Justice			Community Reformulation				
	Theoretics	Science Humanity Theology	Memory Formation			Life Vocation			Practical Models				
Pedagogy			Nursery Pre-School Elementary Hi.Sch. College Adult Educ.										

slang, and other words and phrases which are often offensive to those who enroll in these courses. This is done, according to members of the Institute, to *shock* people into realizing that the seminar is going to be quite different from ones they have participated in as well as to *demonstrate* the Institute's contempt for what it considers to be "perversions" -- i.e., abnormalities or unfortunate results in the church and in the formation and expression of what it terms authentic humanness. As a result, a number of people walk out of the conferences during the first few minutes, and some persons who remain decide to disregard whatever is presented during the remainder of the conference.³

Possibly the most valuable pedagogical tool used by the Ecumenical Institute in dealing with the papers it uses in its courses is what it calls "getting hold of the patterns and structure"⁴ that the author uses in order to "move beyond the content to what is actually in the author's mind."⁵ The Institute calls this method and procedure *charting*. The procedure is as follows:

1. Concentrate on the whole of the paper much as you would a picture. This produces a gestalt for you.
 - a. Scan through the paper (or table of contents, if one). Look at the author's major breaks and subdivisions.

³This information compiled from interviews with persons in San Francisco and Chicago who have been enrolled in these courses, have received reports about them, and also from my personal observations at the pastors' seminar at White Sulphur Springs, February 27 to March 1, 1967.

⁴This method was introduced at the above mentioned conference on February 28, 1967.

⁵*Ibid.*

- b. Run fingers through the paragraphs. See what words, enumerations, etc., jump out at you.
 - c. Go through and number the paragraphs. Lay out the chart.
 - d. Read the conclusion, and the paragraphs before and after the divisions.
 - e. Circle the important words.
 - f. Find key paragraphs where the structure and/or thesis is laid out.
 - g. As yet you are not interested in content but only in topical headings.
2. Relate the paragraphs and topics.
 3. Read and sum up the paragraphs. Do not chart necessarily with the first paragraph, but those that get the topics up and the structure out. Then complete all paragraphs.
 4. Further relate the paragraphs and the topics to refine your structure until a final gestalt comes.
 5. In your own words write a brief paragraph stating what is in each paragraph, each section of your structure and finally for the whole paper.
 6. Retitle the paper and topics in your own words other than the author's.
 7. Relate the final topics and propositions to other writers and your own self-understanding.
 8. Analyze and criticize the author in relation to #7.⁶

The substance of this procedure is followed and carried out by the Institute's pedagogues with the exception of points seven and eight! It has been discovered that participants have *not* been given the freedom to *relate* the papers to other writers *nor* to analyze and criticize them from their own self-understanding.⁷ Instead, participants are told to

⁶From chart distributed at conference on February 28, 1967.

⁷From first-hand observations at the conference at White Sulphur

try to *understand* what the author is saying and see if they can find *evidence* of what is said in their own experience.⁸ As one pedagogue put it: RS-1 (religious studies 1) is a course about life and therefore not concerned whether persons agree or disagree with its contents, but whether persons are willing to look at objective reality -- i.e., their own response to life.⁹

Although charting is a practical pedagogical tool used by the Ecumenical Institute, its use has been greatly perverted. The stated purpose of the Institute for using the charting method is to get at the *structure* of an author's work. This is quite important. But when *structure* becomes more important than *persons*, it becomes *demonic*. For example, when pedagogues are told to follow their agenda and outline at all costs, skillfully deflecting the questions of the participants, and that the most important thing is to impart their message and illustrations, it is clear that structure and content have become primary.¹⁰ If anything, then, the emphasis upon the structure and content of their courses is antithetical to their stated concern for the development of humanness. Hence, their educating becomes authoritarian indoctrination mixed with coercion and intimidation, and their concern for humanness expresses itself as a concern for stifling reflection and suppressing self-expression.

Springs in 1967, and at the 1968 Summer Conference in Chicago. Also from reports of persons who have participated in other conferences conducted by the Institute.

⁸Stated at the 1968 Summer Conference, Chicago.

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰*Ibid.*

In order to attempt to justify their pedagogical methodology, the members of the Institute take the position that all education is *brain-washing* and *manipulation*. True! But all education is not *coercive* and *authoritarian*. The difference is between *persuasion* and *coercion*. The former is a method of *educating*; the latter is a method of *herding*!

A somewhat comical, yet pathetic, part of the manipulating of the Institute's pedagogues is using *whispers* and *shouts* which gives the effect of attempting to seduce their hearers into accepting their message. Then, as if to add insult to injury, you may hear one pedagogue giving a passionate and convincing "personal experience" on one occasion, and another pedagogue giving the *same, verbatim*, "personal experience," with the same intonations and inflections, on another occasion.¹¹

The key pedagogical method used by the Institute is what it calls imaginal education. This method deals with helping the Black residents of Fifth City develop a new image of themselves. According to the Institute

The problem in the ghetto that underlies every other problem is not social inequality. It is not a matter of rights and liberties. It is not a lack of jobs and inadequate income. It is not second-rate education and social reforms. Change all this and the real issue is not touched. The primordial problem in the black inner city is psychological or internal. Every man and every people operate out of a primordial self-image. Their practical action results from that image. The American Negro has an interior image, a self-talk, an operating principle, a spring of action, a self understanding that tells him that he is a second-rate human being. All the benevolent, up-grading, gifts -- public and private -- will not alter this state. The American Negro... sees himself as the

¹¹My wife and I attended two different conferences in 1967, conducted by a different team of pedagogues, and discovered that we had heard the same, *verbatim*, "personal experiences" used by the members of both teams.

bourgeois white man sees him. To use crude language he sees himself as 'Nigger.' He lives and acts out of that metaphor. The deprived Negro senses after himself as a sub-citizen, doomed to a ghetto existence, the victim of social forces beyond his control, incapable of altering his inhuman condition. He can only quiescently submit to his fate or wildly strike out like an irrational animal trapped in a corner of history. The victim image of the black man is the first and fundamental problem in the central city.¹²

As a result of these views, the pedagogical emphasis in the Fifth City Community Reformulation Project is upon helping the Black residents re-create an image of themselves as full human beings with the potential to transform their sub-human state of existence, which has been forced upon them by an unjust, inhumane, white society, into a community of individuals and groups with cultural pride and with the self-determination and power to meet its own needs and determine its own destiny.

The alteration and reformulation of a new self-image is accomplished through a study of Afro-American culture and the development and use of community songs, symbols, and rituals. Of particular interest and significance are the songs of cultural and community identity which have been produced during the past four years. One can see something of the powerful role that these songs play in the imaginal education part of the Institute's program when he sees and hears the residents singing songs such as "Free to Decide."

Free, free, free to decide
What this world is going to be;
This imperative is ours
To be free, free (repeat)¹³

¹²"Human Resources Development Fifth City" (Ecumenical Institute: Chicago, April 8, 1968), 2-3.

¹³"Songs of the Spirit Movement" (Ecumenical Institute: Chicago), 18.

One is impressed with what appears to be a major contribution at this point. For Afro-Americans to *realize* that they *can* decide, choose, and determine their own destiny is a tremendous accomplishment, for they have had over three hundred years of conditioning that convinced them of the converse. This is why it is so fantastic and refreshing to see them beginning to re-condition themselves. Further evidence of this awareness is expressed through other songs of Fifth City. For example: "The Marching Song of the Iron Men" (to the tune of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic").

Deep within the hearts of Black Men
Charred by bitterness and pain,
By three hundred years of slavery,
Of injustice, fear and shame,
Burns the spark of human dignity
Which history will claim
As the destiny of man.

Refrain:

Men of iron, we stand together;
Men of iron, we stand together;
Men of iron, we stand together
For the destiny of man.

From the blackness of the West Side
Now the spark bursts into flame,
Rushing onward from Fifth City,
From Chicago whence it came;
Spreading forth to every city,
Every nation to proclaim
The dignity of man.

Refrain:

Men of iron, we march together ...
For the dignity of man.

See the vision of a life style
Stretch before the eyes of man,
From Brazil, to France, to China,
From the Congo to Iran.
Where all men can live in freedom,

Claim their power and their plan,
Full humanness for all.

Refrain:

Men of iron march together ...
Toward the destiny of man.¹⁴

The power of the sense of responsibility that is emerging in Fifth City is seen in the words of the song, "We've Got To Build Fifth City" (which is sung to the tune of "Lonesome Valley").

We've gotta go out and build Fifth City,
We've gotta build it by ourselves;
Ain't nobody here goin' to build it for us;
We've gotta go out and build Fifth City by
ourselves.

Oh, you can't blame it on the devil,
Oh, you can't blame City Hall;
You can't blame the way life is,
You gotta go out and build Fifth City by
yourself.

Can't depend on Mr. Do-Good,
Can't depend on city gold;
Oh, we can't depend on Mr. Charley,
We've gotta go out and build Fifth City by
ourselves.

We're goin' to build it in Chicago,
As a sign to all mankind;
Of the power of the people,
Who decide to give their lives to change the
world.

We're gonna go out and build Fifth City,
We're gonna build it by ourselves;
Ain't nobody here goin' to build it for us;
We're gonna go out and build Fifth City by
ourselves.¹⁵

One of the most impressive songs of revolution and reformulation in Fifth City is a song which captures the spirit of the residents'

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 21.

seeing the need to become symbol-makers and image-breakers, and was written by a member of the Fifth City board of managers who is one of the most vocal, respected, creative, and feared Black revolutionaries in that community. The title is simply "City 5."

Chorus:

City 5 -- that we love -- Symbol makers,
image breakers. That's what we are --
That's what we are.

Verse:

The Iron Men of -- City 5 -- Have vowed
to die their deaths
Black man -- show the world -- You are
the key. (To...)

Repeat Chorus:

The destiny of one lies in the other --
Don't you see the warning sign.
Shed that image -- or let the Iron Man
mend it --
And -- pick up your task in City 5 --
City 5 -- That name will change the world.

Symbol makers, image breakers --
That's what we are -- That's what we are.¹⁶

These are revolutionary and image-breaking songs of the Black people in Fifth City, but they are by no means unique, for songs of this type have been created and sung by Black Americans for hundreds of years, and are *still* being created and sung by them today. It is equally *significant* that the residents of this community are joining other communities in creating and developing a new image of the Black man in America.

Therefore, we see in the pedagogical program of the Ecumenical Institute an emphasis on structure and imaginal education as the keys

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 23.

to getting at the crux of subject matter as well as to getting at the crux of helping the residents of the community develop a new and better image of themselves.

Summary and Conclusions

Perhaps one of the most ingenious accomplishments of the Ecumenical Institute is its ability to abstract the essential parts from a book or an article in a very few pages. This point is illustrated by the abstracts referred to earlier. Of equal significance is the key role that charting plays in dealing with and understanding the abstracts produced by the Institute.

Moreover, the Institute's attempt to have a comprehensive, yet succinct, pedagogical curriculum embraces what Alfred North Whitehead called the two educational commandments: "Do not teach too many subjects," and "What you teach, teach thoroughly."¹⁷

The other observation that we wish to make involves the probable effect of some of the Institute's methodology on the development of human personality. Lewis J. Sherrill points out that the self, the human personality is *formed, de-formed, re-formed, and transformed* in its relationship with other selves.¹⁸ Therefore, the Ecumenical Institute, in attempting to alter and reformulate human personality, should be aware of and concerned about the uniqueness of individuals and

¹⁷Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education* (New York: New American Library, 1958), 14.

¹⁸Lewis J. Sherrill, *The Gift of Power* (New York: Macmillan, 1957), 45.

the fact that a style of life which may be *humanizing* for one individual may be *dehumanizing* for another.

CHAPTER VI

THE RELATION OF THE CONCEPT OF IMAGINAL EDUCATION TO THE CURRENT BLACK REVOLUTION IN THE UNITED STATES

In this chapter we shall examine the relation of the Institute's concept of imaginal education to the current Black revolution in the United States. The material for this chapter will be drawn primarily from the works of contemporary Black writers and from notes taken during courses conducted by the Ecumenical Institute, as well as from some of the literature it distributes.

Imaginal Education and the Black Revolution

As has already been established, the Ecumenical Institute sees the central problem in the Afro-American ghetto not as social, economic, political, or educational, but as cultural. As a result, imaginal education is the most potent method of attempting to alter and reformulate the Black man's image of himself. In relation to the Fifth City Community Reformulation Project, the process of imaginal education

... involves first of all de-programming the mind-set described earlier as the victim image. Secondly, there must be a re-programming with images of possibility, adequacy, and dignity. In brief, imaginal education endeavors to explode and expand the imagination to provide new tools whereby the individual can reconstruct an image of self significance in relation to his actual situation which will release his unique creativity into history. Imaginal education aims at motivating free, intelligent, responsible involvement in society.... Such a process in the Negro ghetto involves the individual becoming proud of his blackness and then moving on to grasp himself as a global individual participating in the formulation of the new world of tomorrow.¹

¹"Human Resources Development....," 9, 10.

The current Black revolution in America embraces the same goals as does the Ecumenical Institute's process of imaginal education. In the Black revolution, the process is referred to as re-discovering one's identity. At the heart of this quest is the demand to "define"² themselves and at the same time determine their own "destiny."³ Let us take a moment to illustrate these two points.

In 1963, James Baldwin published a series of essays which he had written between 1954 and 1961 in a book entitled *Nobody Knows My Name*. In it, he advanced the thesis that no one gets to know an individual in the same way and to the same extent an individual knows himself. Baldwin therefore postulates that the questions he asks about himself "begin, at last, to illuminate his world, and become one's key to the experience of others."⁴ Hence, the Black man in America today is being challenged to know, accept, and develop himself *first* and move from there to an understanding, acceptance, and identification with others.

In this quest for self-knowledge, Black Americans are facing up to the realization that they were stripped of their identity, heritage, culture, religion, and value system when they were brought to America and "given" the name "Negro." But the name "Negro" is quite inaccurate and therefore unacceptable in view of the fact that it suggests that Black Americans had no identity, heritage, or culture before being

²This term refers to Black Americans deciding by what name they will be known. Example: "Negro," "Afro-American," etc.

³This term refers to Black Americans controlling their own communities. Ex. politically, educationally, economically, etc.

⁴James Baldwin, *Nobody Knows My Name* (New York: Dell, 1963), 13.

brought to this country, and also that the slave-owners were not willing to let them be considered and accepted as Americans, and therefore "defined" them in a way as to cut off their past and limit their present and future. This fact of deculturalization may be called White America's invention of the "Negro."

Historically, great importance has been placed upon the *name* one is given. From the biblical record, Moses is reported to have asked Yahweh:

If I come to the people of Israel and say to them 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name? What shall I say to them?' God said to Moses, '*I AM WHO I AM.*' And he said, 'Say this to the people of Israel, "*I AM* has sent me to you".'⁵

Likewise, Jesus is reported to have asked the "demon" or "unclean spirits" he came in contact with in the country of the Gadarenes, "What is your name?"⁶ This question is held to be in keeping with an ancient tradition which said if one knew the name of a "demon" or "evil spirit" he would be better able to exercise power or control over him. In fact, there was a Hebrew custom that their children would be expected to *actualize* their name or *become* what their name signified. Thus, *Moses* is the one drawn out of the water, *Saul* is the one who asks, and *Jesus* is the one who saves.

Today, Black Americans are becoming concerned about the name by which they are called. Some prefer to be called Negro, others prefer to be called Colored, still others prefer to be called Afro-American or African-American. Relatively few Black Americans, however, prefer to

⁵Exodus 3:13-14.

⁶Mark 5:9.

be called Colored. Most still accept the designation Negro. But there is a rapidly increasing number who prefer to be called Black or Afro-American. In fact, the term Negro is actually the Spanish word which means Black. Most Black Americans therefore capitalize the word black when referring to themselves because they feel if the Spanish word for them can be capitalized so can (and should) the English word.

In fact, most Black Americans accept the term Black as well as they do any other designation or description. Acceptance of this definition or designation is almost universal within this ethnic group because they are coming to realize (contrary to what they have been taught) that black is not necessarily bad or ugly. This is why one will hear old and young alike proclaiming for the first time and with great gusto: "Black is beautiful!"

On the other hand, the term Black is being generally accepted also because of its threefold connotation -- color, consciousness, and culture.⁷ Black Americans are realizing, regardless of whether they are black, brown, or some other color so far as skin pigmentation is concerned, they have a common heritage, a common culture, and share a common plight in America. Therefore, the term black unifies *all* in a way that no other term does, because *all* Black Americans are conscious of their plight -- the injustices, inequities, inhumanities, limitations, etc., which they suffer because of their ethnic identity and color. However, in the final analysis, more Black Americans are realizing that

⁷Maulana Ron Karenga, *The Quotable Karenga* (Los Angeles: US Organization, 1967), 4.

they have a dual heritage -- African and American -- and therefore because of this historical and cultural fact, they *are* and should properly be called *African-Americans* or *Afro-Americans*.

As a result of this realization, many Afro-Americans are attempting to recapture some of the heritage and culture of which they were stripped. This attempt is seen in the increasing demand for African and African-American studies, African food, clothing, music, literature, and poetry. Sometimes these Afro-Americans are accused of trying to borrow from Africa. But as Maulana Ron Karenga puts it: we are not *borrowing* from Africa, but simply *reclaiming* and *utilizing* "what was ours from the start."⁸

The deculturization, alienation, and disenfranchisement of the Afro-American in America has led to the present cry and quest for "Black Power." This phrase is exceedingly frightening to most whites and to many blacks -- mainly because they do not understand the phrase. The phrase actually means Black Americans acquiring and using the necessary economic, educational, and political power to change the destiny of Black Americans by enabling them to have bargaining power (as other groups have) with the "Establishment" and other power groups which make up and control it -- political parties, school boards, slumlords, etc.

The problem of many people is that they equate the basic *goal* (Black economic, educational, and political power) with the sundry array of *means* that are being projected as ways of *achieving* this goal. But anytime a Black person talks about advancement, he is talking about

⁸*Ibid.*, 7.

"Black Power" -- whether he be what is considered a "revolutionary," a "militant," a "moderate," or an "Uncle Tom." The difference lies in the variety and degree of the *means* that are being advanced for obtaining this "Black Power."

Stokely Carmichael, the popularizer of the phrase "Black Power," explicates, in corroboration with Professor Charles V. Hamilton, the political, economic, and educational nature of Black Power in the book they co-authored, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*. They state:

This book presents a political framework and ideology which represents the last reasonable opportunity for this society to work out its racial problems short of prolonged destructive guerilla warfare. That such violent warfare may be unavoidable is not herein denied. But if there is the slightest chance to avoid it the politics of Black Power, as described in this book is seen as the only viable hope.⁹

The program and work of the Ecumenical Institute reflects its awareness of these cultural changes in the Black community as well as in society in general and is making a creative, dynamic, and radical attempt to deal with them. Since its inception, the Institute has recognized the problem of identity and image-reformulation in the Black community, and has therefore been making a direct assault on what it calls the "nigger image" and "victim image" of many Black Americans.

Just as Afro-Americans have been "defined" until now by white Americans, persons in general have had their identity "defined" for them by their parents and other persons who helped shape their early

⁹Stokely Carmichael & Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power* (New York: Vintage, 1967), inside cover.

concepts of themselves. It is for this reason that Hugh Missildine talks about controlling, re-synthesizing, and being a "parent" to our "inner child of the past."¹⁰ It is his contention that we carry around inside us not only the child we once *were* but also the attitudes of our parents toward us as a child, and therefore, many of our attitudes toward children as well as toward ourselves are not our own but have been "borrowed" from our parents.¹¹ When one realizes that each individual is a multiplicity of relationships, it gives him some indication of the laborious task involved in trying to uncover the "real you" and then *become* that person. It is not often easy for one to discover and accept himself, but when one is able to attain this degree of maturity, it is indeed like discovering and acquiring "a pearl of great value."¹² In spite of its shortcomings, the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago is one contemporary group which sees the value of persons growing and developing to full maturity and is actively engaged in bringing about what it is convinced will help persons find and become themselves.

In this chapter we have seen the strong role that cultural and imaginal education play in the pedagogical and community reformulation work of the Ecumenical Institute and also noted the primacy of structure as a pedagogical tool. It was noted that although the Institute claims that its central pedagogical and community reformulation goal is to alter, reformulate, and provide constructs that will foster the

¹⁰W. Hugh Missildine, *Your Inner Child of the Past* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963), 22.

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²Matthew 13:46.

development of humanness, in practice, particularly in its introductory course (RS-1), the emphasis is not placed upon persons nor upon humanness, but upon indoctrination. Of course, they hold that their methodology and indoctrination *does* foster the development of creative and dynamic personalities. For some persons, possibly so; for many others, probably not. Many behavioral scientists would no doubt question whether some of their methodology actually aids the *development* or the *perversion* of humanness.

Furthermore, in light of the Institute's having a preconceived notion of what styles authentic humanness should take, and does not recognize the legitimacy of other styles, it is highly questionable that their indoctrination actually motivates enough "free, intelligent, responsible involvement in society."¹³

The most positive elements in the pedagogical and community reformulation work of the Ecumenical Institute is that they do try to be comprehensive in their curriculum and thorough in their attempt to get to and deal with the problems of ghettoized Black Americans. It is obvious that they have worked meticulously and indefatigably to arrive at where the psychological, social, economic, educational, and cultural *pain* is in the Black ghetto, and also, at how to deal with that pain. Therefore, it is questionable that they recognize and respect the uniqueness of persons when it comes to helping persons develop life styles that are authentic for them. It is one thing to provide persons with the *tools* for developing self-authenticity, but quite another to

¹³"Human Resources Development...", 9, 10.

seek to predetermine that these tools can and should produce a pre-defined type of individual. Again, we must ask the question whether the type of "authentic" humanness that the Ecumenical Institute is attempting to produce is a caricature insofar as it attempts to *determine* creativity or whether it simply creates a climate which is conducive for creativity to develop and express itself *freely*. The Institute's position would be much more acceptable if it would simply advance its style of life as *one* style of life that *may* be authentic for many persons rather than as *the* style of life that every person must seek and follow in order to find primordial fulfillment.

It is significant that the curriculum of the Ecumenical Institute does not concern itself with simply educating *individuals*, but with educating and equipping individuals to be involved in changing *cultures*. Regardless of the criticisms advanced regarding some of the Institute's methodology, this is one point which may be held to be quite significant. Morris Bigge calls this type of educator a *cultural architect*.¹⁴ He explains that

A teacher who adopts this view sees himself as an innovator. In his thinking he designs the specifications for an ideal culture. He then teaches the attitudes and values and knowledge which will cause new generations to move in a direction of his ideal. He is likely to push ideas toward which resistance will develop and is not reluctant to indoctrinate and propagandize in order to achieve his purpose. Since the teacher ... is discontent with the state of affairs as they are and wants to introduce a new cultural design, his point of view has been called 'social reconstructionism.'¹⁵

¹⁴Morris Bigge, *Learning Theories For Teachers* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 311.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

This is precisely what the pedagogues at the Ecumenical Institute seek to do. They seek to be cultural architects. They seek to teach attitudes and values and to indoctrinate and propagandize. *None* of this is essentially negative by itself. *All* education seeks to do this in one way or another. The *danger* (and a negative danger at that) comes when a teacher or a group of pedagogues attempt to do this through *coercion, manipulation, and one-way communication.*

Summary and Conclusions

The goal for the Institute's Fifth City Project is to help the residents of the community develop a more positive image of themselves and develop their own constructs to deal with all of the community's problems: economic, educational, political, legal assistance, consumer education, family planning, etc. According to the original plan, the Institute hoped significantly to indoctrinate and train a sufficient number of the residents to be able to provide leadership in every area of concern -- i.e., those eighty constructs noted in chapter three which emphasize the economic, cultural, symbolic, stylistic, and political guilds, the boards and committees into which they are divided, as well as the stakes and quads around which those constructs operate -- by the eighth year after the Project came into being (1972). However, as a result of the 1968 riot in Chicago (which resulted in great damage to the Fifth City community) as well as the desire for Black Americans in general, and specifically in Fifth City, to determine their own destiny *without* being told *what* to do and *how* to do what is best for them by a group of white missionaries, it was rumored at the Institute's 1968

Summer Conference that an attempt would be made to complete their work of indoctrinating and otherwise preparing this Black community for full self-leadership by November 1968. There is no evidence at this time (April 1969) that the releasing of the reins of leadership by the Institute and turning them over to the community for it to direct the Project (or do whatever it wills -- including abandoning it) has as yet taken place.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we shall examine some of the positive and negative aspects of the program of the Ecumenical Institute, advance several questions, comments, and recommendations, and offer a concluding statement. As in the previous chapters, the material will be drawn from notes taken during courses conducted by the Institute, literature distributed by it, and our personal evaluation.

Positive Aspects of the Program

In the foregoing pages we have reviewed and examined the history, purpose, and program of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago. The two areas of primary concern have been the curriculum and the community reformulation project. Therefore, our evaluation of the Institute's program will focus upon these two aspects.

Two of the strongest positive features of the Ecumenical Institute's curriculum are that it is designed to provide persons with a succinct, but in depth, religious and cultural education, and that it also seeks to change entire cultures.

The first point has been alluded to several times in this study. Therefore, we would simply like to re-emphasize the relevance and significance of the seven religious and seven cultural studies courses, and the three advanced supplementary studies. These seventeen courses are indeed basic to giving one a gestalt of the dynamics of the various cultures as well as of the cosmic order and its effect upon shaping

man's cosmology.

The chief value of the Fifth City Community Reformulation Project is that it seeks to help the persons of this community change their self-image and seeks to train them to be able to help themselves develop their own indigenous leadership. A description of how the members of the Institute go about this was presented in chapter two.

Negative Aspects of the Program

The main negative aspect of the Ecumenical Institute's pedagogical program is that they refuse to allow for two-way communication and thus reject being criticized and having their ideas questioned. Regardless of how strongly a person may hold a position and wants others to accept his position, he is justified in being as persuasive as he is capable only so long as he is willing to permit his ideas and proposals to be scrutinized, then accepted or rejected by those doing the scrutinizing. In education, *persuasion* should take precedence over *coercion* and *intimidation*.

No person or group has a corner on truth and no person or group is capable of projecting any plan or model that is above criticism and beyond improvement. The chief perversion of the Ecumenical Institute is that it is convinced that it has come up with the *best* (indeed, if not the *only*) model for education, community reformulation, and the development of authentic humanness. This is quite evident in the cynicism and disdain with which they look upon those who disagree with them or reject their ideas. Therefore, the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago, along with whatever else it might be, is a perfect example of a group that has what

has been termed a "Messiah-Complex." Because they are convinced they have *the* answer to the depth human as well as social problems of our age, they may well qualify as the *Neo-Gnostics* of the Twentieth Century.

Another criticism of the Ecumenical Institute's educational curriculum is that it is devised for persons who have had formal education which would at least be equivalent to that of a high school freshman. This is evident in light of the fact that the lowest grade level for which they have seminars is high school students. Yet, they expect people who have been educationally deprived to be able to study and comprehend courses which deal with the writings of men like Bonhoeffer, Bultmann, Tillich, and H. Richard Niebuhr. It is inconceivable that persons who have had little or no formal education would be able to adequately digest and understand the concepts of men like these.

When we look at the Fifth City Community Reformulation Project, there are two main critical observations we wish to make. In the first place, the project was initiated by persons who came (*uninvited* and *unwanted*)¹ from *outside* the community with a set of ideas as to what the needs of the community were from *their* point of view, and how they were going to meet these needs. The project was not something which grew out of the community, but something which was *brought to* the community. The result was that the project was not the *community's* but the *Institute's*.

In the second place, it was noted earlier that the Ecumenical

¹Resistance to their coming was expressed by several members of the Institute staff this past summer. In fact, much resistance is still evident.

Institute staff stated that it had originally planned to control the project (by setting its goals, selecting its leaders, etc.) until the project got its impetus, then let the residents control it. As it has developed, the residents who were interviewed this past summer felt that the Institute still controlled the project although the residents in the project area have elected their own leaders for various committees and groups. The members of the Institute whom we interviewed would not deny or confirm this report but simply stated that plans were being made then (July 1968) to turn the project over to the residents within the next four months (November 1968) instead of in the next four years (by 1972), as was originally planned. It would appear that if the leadership that has been developed during the past four years is incapable of helping the community to determine its own goals, plan its own strategies, implement its own plans, as well as evaluate and stabilize the results, the project has already failed. Therefore, the way the Institute could best evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the Project is to let the residents operate and control it. Rather than be in control of the Project, the Institute personnel might then become advisers and resource persons when asked.

Questions, Comments, and Recommendations

As we reflect upon the entire program of the Ecumenical Institute, the following questions and comments come to mind: (1) Why has not the Institute worked with any of the churches in Fifth City? One wonders how justified the Institute is in encouraging those who have formed local congregation cadres to form ecumenical cadres in

their communities when the Institute itself has not worked with any of the congregations within its community. (2) It would be interesting to know how many local congregation cadres have had (or are having) any significant results in effecting changes in the structure and participation of the worship services, in the Christian education department, and in educating and recruiting persons to be engaged in community and social action. (3) Why the members of the Ecumenical Institute staff do not join various congregations in their own community and attempt to effect some of the changes they deem so necessary for the renewal of the Church? It is questionable whether it is sufficient only to encourage course graduates to work for the renewal of their congregations, and the persons doing the encouraging not be actively engaged in doing the same -- and this includes facing the hostility and resistance to change that others have to face in congregations. Furthermore, if the members of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago were doing the same things in local congregations they were asking their graduates to do, they would better understand some of the problems graduates have in this regard and would be better able to evaluate their proposals. (4) Why does not the Ecumenical Institute establish training and community reformulation centers in some suburban communities?

In light of these questions and comments, we would like to recommend that: (1) the members of the Ecumenical Institute become actively involved in doing the things in local congregations that they encourage course graduates to do, (2) that the Institute recruit and send staff persons to become residents and create and develop training and community reformulation centers in other cities, and that (3) more

congregations become exposed to and examine and evaluate the pedagogical and community reformulation work of the Ecumenical Institute as they plan their programs of Christian education and community involvement.

Concluding Statement

The thesis of this study was that the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago offers, at least in part, a viable model for church and community renewal and attempts to get to the heart of the problem by struggling with the concept of being or becoming authentically human. We further hypothesized that the attempt to alter the existing forms of primordial existence permeates the entire program of the Institute and is its basic concern. In retrospect, it is felt that these two hypotheses have been substantiated. However, we wish to make it clear that there is no pretense that this study was in any way exhaustive. Instead, it attempted to present a concise, systematic statement regarding the nature, purpose, and work of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

The objective of this study was not simply to analyze and critique the program and work of the Ecumenical Institute but also to determine how its program and work might enhance the renewal of the Christian Church. However, it has been discovered that the courses in the Institute's educational curriculum, as well as its propositions and program for community reformulation and development, are designed not simply to help renew the Christian Church, but also as a kind of blueprint for a new society and a new world. Therefore, it has become evident that those concerned about the renewal of the Christian Church must not stop there, but must also seek to help renew the other

institutions of our own society, as well as seek ways to help people around the world to renew their cultures, in order to facilitate the emergence of their true personality and the development of their human potential.

A part of the stated purpose of this study was that the findings would be looked at in light of our present and ongoing attempt to develop methods and acquire tools that may contribute to the continued renewal of my present congregation.

Since the organization of our church, the Cosmopolitan Baptist Church at San Francisco, in 1963, our aim has been to create and develop an informed, concerned, involved, growing congregation which would seek to not simply keep the church machinery operating, but which would also be vitally interested in, related to, and involved with persons and groups in the wider community in efforts to improve and develop our total community in every area.

Our church constitution, which was revised in December 1967, states our purpose as seeking to "help persons know and accept themselves and others, accept the acceptance of God as he is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, develop their potentialities in as many areas as possible, and be actively involved in work for community and world betterment."² Therefore, one of the conditions for continued membership in our church is that each member must relate functionally to some aspect of community work as well as to the church fellowship at least

²Cosmopolitan Baptist Church, *Revised Constitution* (San Francisco: 1967).

once every three months. Each group in our church (men, women, youth) adopts a certain area of community work each year and members may participate through one of these organizations, through some other organization, or as individuals.

As a result of the efforts of members of our congregation, in cooperation with members of some thirteen sister congregations of several denominations and an even larger number of community improvement groups, councils, and parent-teacher associations, our community's OMI Project (now known as the OMI Association), came into being in the Fall of 1965.

One unique feature about this organization is that the three communities involved -- Oceanview, Merced Heights, Ingleside -- represent a cross-section of ethnic groups although the residents in each community are predominantly either Caucasian or Afro-American. To illustrate: the Oceanview community is composed of some 15,000 residents, ninety per cent or more of whom are of Afro-American descent, and the homes in this community range in price from \$20,000 to \$40,000. On the other hand, the Merced Heights and Ingleside communities together comprise some 30,000 residents, ninety per cent or more of whom are of Caucasian descent, and the homes in these two communities range in price from under \$40,000 to over \$100,000.

These three communities have united their concerns and efforts during the past three and one-half years, and have worked together for their individual and mutual benefit in the areas of open housing, educational improvements in the schools in these three communities, job opportunities, beautification and conservation of the area, mental

health, political education, ways and means for financing various undertakings, welcoming new residents, and in helping to create and develop several youth organizations in which youngsters of various ethnic, religious, and non-religious backgrounds participate in various interest groups -- ranging from ethnic studies, to youth improvement, to athletics and recreation, to coffee houses which serve as nodes for various discussion groups, to inter-group dances and other social activities.

Over half of the adults and almost all of the youth in our congregation are related to and involved to some extent in one or more of our community's committees or groups. Of the eight functioning committees of the OMI Association, six have been chaired by members of our congregation, three are presently chaired by members of our congregation, and the pastor serves as president of the OMI Association.

Out of 45,000 residents in the total Association area, over 600 persons are presently actively and consistently involved in one or more of the committees of the Association and approximately ten per cent of them are members of Cosmopolitan Church.

To date, perhaps the strongest and most productive of our Association's committees has been the education committee, which secured a \$243,000 planning grant from the U. S. Department of Education in 1967 to explore the needs of our tri-community's five elementary schools and received a \$275,000 grant in September 1968, to initiate phase one of a creative reading-language arts program in each of these schools plus two parochial schools in the community, and has a projected budget of \$550,000 for 1969-70.

Several members of Cosmopolitan hold various positions in the

Community Education Planning Project which has come into being as a result of the activity of the education committee. For example: the assistant director of the project, several of the 121 block communicators, and one of the two community consultants to the project.

In addition, the Association publishes a monthly newsletter which is currently circulated to over 5000 families in the community and hopes to reach all 15,000 families in the Association area sometime this summer.

The political education committee is presently working on proposals for our city's charter revision, has organized and conducted community-wide forums on city and state propositions, as well as planned and implemented programs where the general community could meet and discuss the issues with candidates for city, state, congressional, and senatorial offices. The committee has also taken positions on several issues (as have all our committees and the Association itself), including the recent crisis at San Francisco State College, in which it favored the demands of the students and striking faculty members and endorsed the recommendation that several regional boards of trustees be established throughout the state, one of which would be responsible for and responsive to the colleges of the San Francisco Bay area. In regard to our city charter revision, members of this committee are working to help remove the provision for giving tenure to school principals and other administrative personnel, to help remove all matters pertaining to public education from the city charter, and to decentralize our Board of Supervisors by having candidates run for office from numbered districts instead of running for positions on the Board from the

city-at-large.

During the first quarter of 1969, the Association has:

(1) revised its Constitution to change the name of our organization from the OMI Project to the OMI Association and to open membership in the Association to all persons in the community instead of to just organizations in the community which would be represented by two persons, (2) presented an International Festival which was attended by more than 500 persons and which netted almost \$800, (3) conducted a rummage sale which netted another \$800, and (4) has been in contact with the Superintendent of Schools regarding the possible establishment of a model community "school board" which would be elected by the OMI community and would have a majority of community persons represented on it who would be able to make and implement plans for the development of the schools in our tri-community, and the community would be able to recommend through this "board" personnel to staff its schools.

In February 1967, four laymen and the pastor of Cosmopolitan Church were exposed to the program and work of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago as a result of attending one of its pastors' seminars and one of its laymen's conferences, respectively, in Northern California. As a result of these conferences, certain changes have taken place in the total church structure and operations. (1) In *April 1967* our church voted to discontinue use of the American Baptist educational material and began to create our own material in order to deal with subjects and topics which are relevant to the members of our congregation and which deal with issues and problems which we will be addressing ourselves to specifically. (2) In *July 1967* our church decided to schedule all

study and planning meetings of the church for Sunday evenings in order to work as much as possible in the community during the week. (3) The pastor was so impressed by many facets of the Ecumenical Institute program that he decided to write his dissertation on the program and work of this organization when he enrolled in the post-B.D./Rel.D. program at the Southern California School of Theology at Claremont in *September 1967*. (4) It was decided in *October 1967* (after being discussed for some three years) that we would inaugurate a question period following the pastor's sermon each Sunday which would be a part of our worship service. As a result, the pastor speaks between 11:30 a.m. and 12 o'clock noon, and the congregation may respond to his message during the service until 12:30 p.m. The benediction is usually given around 12:30 p.m. and if the question period needs to be extended, we dismiss and those who wish to remain longer may do so or we schedule a time later in the afternoon (or for some other time) to further the discussion. (5) In *December 1967*, again, partially as a result of our reflection upon the program and work of the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago, we revised our Church Constitution to make study and community involvement a requirement for continued membership, and we also restated our purpose, as indicated earlier in this chapter. (6) The pastor participated in the summer session at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago in *June-July 1968* in order to become exposed to the entire program of the Institute and be better able to assess its merits from first-hand observation, participation, and to meet and talk with members of the Institute, other conference participants, and many residents of Fifth City. (7) Our community has been talking about creating a preschool program for

several years now, and as a result of my observing the preschool program conducted by the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago, I have volunteered to work on this committee and have suggested that we study the manual of operations of the Institute's preschool program as well as other bold and imaginative preschool programs as we attempt to create a design for a preschool program to present to our community.

Perhaps the most daring venture of our congregation thus far has been to allow members of the Black Student Union and Third World Liberation Front at San Francisco State College to use our facilities for twelve hours a day, five days a week, for their legal defense activities during the recent crisis at the college. As the situation developed, around mid-December the Ecumenical House (the United Protestant Ministry for the College) and the Newman House (its Roman Catholic counterpart) refused to allow the members of the Black Student Union and Third World Liberation Front to conduct any meetings on their premises or in any way to further use their facilities. Our church, in spite of our building being located several blocks from the college, was asked to consider allowing these two groups to use our facilities for their legal defense work. Our church discussed the matter after the morning worship service on the third Sunday in December and voted unanimously to extend to these two groups the use of our facilities for their legal defense activities for a period of six weeks, with the understanding that the time could be extended, if necessary. As it turned out, our facilities were used by these groups for approximately three weeks.

There is no doubt that in spite of the criticisms that we have advanced regarding some of the aspects of the program and work of the

Ecumenical Institute: Chicago, there is also much that we deem to be of value and have been fortunate to have made some significant changes and improvements in the design for our church's internal and external work as a result of reflecting upon ideas secured as a result of our experience with and at the Ecumenical Institute: Chicago.

As noted, we are designing our own Christian education curriculum (which we hope will be comprehensive as well as relevant to the needs and goals of our members) and we have long been entrenched in the total life and work of our community as the result of prior convictions. The only change in our worship service has been the addition of a question period following the message, which has been exceedingly valuable. However, we have not felt the necessity to develop cadres, as suggested by the Ecumenical Institute, nor have we had the desire nor felt the need to make any changes in our liturgy. We have always conducted relaxed, informal worship services which are accentuated with soulful singing, impromptu prayers, occasional personal testimonies, and choruses of "amens" because such is our desire and style, as it is the desire and style of most predominantly Black worshipping communities (seven members of our congregation are white) in our culture. We feel somewhat blessed to feel free to be *expressive* in worship as well as feel *responsive* in active service. Each day we hope to discover more of what it means to be and how to be an informed, concerned, involved, growing congregation.

We who seek to be the Church, therefore, have both the opportunity as well as the responsibility to work intentionally for the creation and development of a more humanizing world. But we can do that only as we develop a genuine concern for the welfare of others.

One of the cardinal tenets held by the Ecumenical Institute is that "The Word" of the Gospel (you are accepted) demands a response, "The Deed," the "Cruciform Response," which is the giving of oneself in service to God through serving others. This response may be said to mean:

To dream the impossible dream
 To fight the unbeatable foe
 To bear the unbearable sorrow
 To walk where the brave dare not go
 To right the unrightable wrong
 To love pure you from afar.

To strive though your arms are so weary
 To reach the unreachable star.
 This is my quest, to follow that star
 No matter how hopeless, no matter how far.
 To fight for the right without weary or pause.
 To be willing to march into hell for a heavenly
 cause
 And to know when my ending is here,
 when my journey is done
 That my heart will rest knowing that the
 world is better
 That a man scorned and weary of scars
 gave his last ounce of courage
 To reach the unreachable stars.³

As we who seek to be churchmen, as well as persons in general, are willing to drop the shackles of unconcern and apathy, and pick up the task of working for a better tomorrow, we will then be on our way toward true maturity and real humanity, and, in the words of the Afro-American spiritual, we will be able to rejoice in saying,

Free at last; free at last, thank God
 almighty; we are free at last.

³Reprinted in *I.E.* (November 1966), 11, from the musical version of *Don Quixote, Man of La Mancha*. The song is entitled, "The Quest for the Impossible Dream."

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